

FAMILY IN INDIA : A PERSPECTIVE

IN 1963, I agreed to the request from the Indian Institute of Public Administration to write a small monograph on the emerging pattern of family in India in about 1975. I propose to compensate for the delay in producing the study by shifting its sight to a date beyond 1975, that is, up to the end of the present century. I cannot, however, decide so easily on its content. The discussion in a small monograph is likely to be diffused and superficial if all or several aspects of the family in India are discussed simultaneously. The choice of an aspect, in terms of its priority-rating, is therefore indicated. My choice falls on a discussion of the emerging pattern of family structures for two main reasons: (1) structural variations give us the minimal but a precise appreciation of a phenomenon, and (2) more information is available on structural variations of the family in India than on its other aspects.

We shall organize the discussion around a key question: Are the joint family structures in India being nuclearized in course of time? The question has its own usefulness in developing a perspective of family in contemporary India. Its relevance to consolidate our appreciation of social dynamics is also suggested and substantiated in various writings (see, for details, Kolenda, 1968: 339-342). Moreover, if we examine this question objectively and comprehensively, we should be able to bring into focus the emerging pattern of family structures in India.

In this monograph, therefore, I shall first state the problem we face to inquire into the question of nuclearization of joint family structures in India, and explain the need for evolving a model to answer this question unambiguously. Next, we shall build that model in light of the information available today. Lastly, we shall discuss the empirical data with reference to this model in order that we may infer

on the emerging pattern of family structures in India and, on that basis, develop a perspective of family in India.

The present study, thus, will deal with *a* perspective of family in India, and not *the* perspective which is a matter of conjecture and speculation at the current state of our knowledge on the subject. It will, however, be seen from the discussion which follows that a precise formulation of this perspective should be the first step in paving the way to appreciate eventually *the* perspective of family in India. For it will be so designed that it may be brought to sharper focus with our ever-increasing knowledge on the subject. It will, therefore, lead to the unfolding of *the* perspective with greater precision and exactitude as our understanding of the family in India becomes more and more consolidated and comprehensive.

II

Two viewpoints are prevalent in India today: (1) nuclearization of joint family structures is taking place in India, and (2) nuclearization of joint family structures is *not* taking place. Both viewpoints are supported by arguments and counter-arguments, by evidence and counter-evidence. We may examine some of them.

Kapadia's findings and the overall caution sounded by Nimkoff support the second viewpoint (Kapadia, 1956: 111-126; Nimkoff, 1959: 34). But the protagonists of the first viewpoint will state: (1) the empirical investigations of Kapadia and others, which refer to a few towns and villages only, are of local importance and do not represent the Indian society as a whole, and (2) Nimkoff's caution is too general.

Desai has exposed the fallacy of inferring a rising incidence of nuclear structures from the number of persons in households or families, and has shown, additionally, that the co-resident and commensal kin-groups may be nuclear but "joint family"-wise integration is maintained among those units which are identified as components of a joint structure (Desai, 1964: 25-27, 40 ff).¹ But the protagonists of the first

¹ Since the extended and nuclear families are distinguished in terms of the presence or absence of the lineal and/or affinal relations in them, any correlation assumed between family size and composition will be irrelevant in theory. In practice also it is found to be wrong. For example, a random sample survey of 4,120 family-units (co-resident and commensal kin-groups), which the Sociological Research Unit of the Indian Statistical Institute conducted in 1960-61 in West Bengal, gave 4.50 ± 0.31 and 4.83 ± 0.43 as the average size of a nuclear and an extended family, respectively.

viewpoint will state: (1) the association found among those nuclear units which are identified as components of a joint structure manifest the privileges and obligations of kinship relations in a society where the ascriptive bonds still play a dominant role, (2) the interpretation of the association to substantiate "joint-family"-wise integration is fallacious, and (3) the presence of a large number of co-resident and commensal kingroups as nuclear families in the society substantiates a course of nuclearization of the "traditional" joint families.

Mukherjee has pointed out that a large number of "heads" of those co-residents and commensal kingroups which conform to the nuclear structure enumerate such persons as their "family members" who would have composed joint families of the respective "heads" (Mukherjee, 1965: 31ff). He has further demonstrated that the increase in the proportion of nuclear to joint families as co-resident and commensal kingroups may be associated with the viability of particular social strata: the stratum which consistently represents the joint structure may contain less and less number of family-units in course of time and the stratum which represents predominantly the nuclear structure over the time period may gain correspondingly in the number of family-units (Mukherjee, 1968: 47). The protagonists of the first viewpoint will state, however: (1) the orientation of the people towards the joint family organization is immaterial to the fact that the social situation is conditioning them to live in nuclear units, and (2) certain social groups may cling to the joint family structure but their decreasing representation in the society indicates that the joint families are systematically replaced by nuclear structures.

The current findings on the nuclear and joint family structures in India, thus, suggest contradictory inference: an outcome of social research on virtually all pressing problems in India, like urbanization and social transformation, industrialization and social change, family planning programmes and population control, etc. (Mukherjee, 1965: 3-105).

This, I believe, is largely due to our failure to study a problem in the logical sequence of answering three questions in regard to a phenomenon: *what*, *how*, and *why* it is. In order to answer these questions we are required to: (1) formulate the problem precisely and comprehensively, (2) design a frame of reference appropriate to the formulation, and (3) investigate the content of the frame of reference unambiguously. We do not, however, always follow the procedure rigorously. For example, it appears that the problem in the present context is formulated satisfactorily since we state that our objective is to ascertain whether the joint family structures are "nuclearized", that is,

they are replaced by nuclear structures through a process of change from the former to the latter. We may hold, however, irreconcilably different views on the manner of identification of joint family structures and, thus, on the manner of their replacement by nuclear structures. As a result, the problem may be delimited differently and ambiguously, leading to contradictory inferences.

The scope of the problem is restricted according as we consider one or another societal attribute to be the decisive factor in defining a joint family. It is virtually confined to social psychology if the "jointness" of a family is determined by the mental orientation of the people, *viz.*, whom one considers to be his or her family members. It becomes a matter of interpretation in sociology if "jointness" is determined in terms of a sharing what are regarded as "familial" privileges and obligations among a number of persons related by blood or marriage. It appears to be irrevocably limited to the locally functioning societal units if the "jointness" of a family is determined exclusively in terms of the kinship composition of the co-resident and commensal kingroups, *viz.*, whether or not they contain lineal and/or affinal relations. And, pursuant to such restrictions imposed on the scope of the problem, it may almost disappear (as for the first of the above three instances) or is only partially exposed (as for the second instance) or may be oversimplified (as for the third instance).

The restrictions to the problem will have to be removed, therefore. This may be done by placing the societal attributes found essential to characterize "jointness" of a family in a logical sequence. Such as, the minimal criterion to register a disintegration of "jointness" may be in terms of the immediately identifiable characteristic of forming locally functioning units, *viz.*, whether the joint families as co-resident and commensal kingroups are replaced by nuclear families as co-resident and commensal kingroups. The more stringent criterion to register the same may be in terms of an increasingly reduced share of privileges and obligations by those locally functioning nuclear units which have replaced a locally functioning joint family structure. The most stringent criterion to register the same may be in terms of a gradual disappearance of the mental orientation of the constituents of these units to belong to a "joint family". The problem, thus, can be formulated precisely and comprehensively by referring the above and all other pertinent characteristics of "jointness" to a course of nuclearization of joint family structures in successive stages: from the immediately identifiable situation to form locally functioning units to the stage of final achievement when the "joint family" is lost also in the mental horizon of the people.

To begin with, therefore, we should examine whether the joint family structures as co-resident and commensal kingroups are replaced by corresponding nuclear structures. Because if this be not true, further enquiries into the question of nuclearization from the structural aspect may be redundant. Alternatively, the course of future research will have to be designed differently, as we shall suggest at the end of this monograph.

Mostly, however, we accept the replacement of locally functioning joint families by nuclear units as *fait accompli*. The data available on variations in family structure in India are sparse and sporadic. They cannot give us a precise estimate of the relative incidence of the nuclear and joint families in India as a whole. Nevertheless they suggest that an appreciable number of nuclear families, as co-resident and commensal kingroups, is to be found almost anywhere in India. In some places the data record a higher incidence of the nuclear than the joint family structure. The deduction appears to be obvious, therefore, that as locally functioning units the joint families are replaced by nuclear families.² So that, instead of examining this elementary but crucial point to answer the question of nuclearization of joint family structures, we examine the subsequent point to ascertain whether the course of nuclearization is dictated by the emergence of such values in the society which are contrary to a joint family organization.

We, thus, miss a vital step in our course of research by failing to appraise the meaning of the quantitative data with reference to the formulation of the problem that the joint family structures are replaced by nuclear units through a process of change from the former to the latter. For the formulation involves two mutually distinct but equally essential conditions to denote the process of change: (1) whether the joint structures are breaking into nuclear units, and (2) whether the nuclear units are pursuing the course of nuclearization by not reverting back to *status quo ante*. Our first task, accordingly, is to design a frame of reference to evaluate the data available on nuclear and joint family structures in India as forming co-resident and commensal kingroups. Our second task is to examine the sociological implications of a proper appraisal of the data in reference to the frame designed for the purpose. And, in light of the knowledge gained by undertaking the above two, our third task is to suggest courses of research to answer

² The Census Commissioner of 1951 population census of India wrote: "Such a large proportion of small households (33 per cent in a 'typical village' and 38 per cent in a 'typical town') is a *prima facie* indication that families do not continue to be 'joint' according to the traditional custom of the country and the habit of breaking away from the joint family and setting-up separate households is quite strong." (Gopalaswami, 1953 : 10).

eventually the question of nuclearization of joint family structures in India. In the following pages, therefore, I shall briefly deal with these tasks with reference to the patrilineal-patrivirilocal joint family which is the commonly found joint structure in India.³

III

The formation of nuclear units by the disintegration of patrilineal joint families means that one or more "cutting off" points are in operation in the society vis-a-vis the propagation of the patrilineally oriented family of a man. These points will denote the segmentation of joint structures but all of them may not refer to a process of nuclearization. For any process, as stated before, has two aspects to deal with: at the point it begins to operate and at its culmination. The break-up of joint families into nuclear units will, therefore, support the first aspect; the second will be assured by the nuclear units remaining nuclear and not reverting back to joint structures. In this sequence, some forms of segmentation of the ancestral joint structure may substantiate only a course of their restricted proliferation. Some others may lead to the formation of nuclear families and, thus, call for an examination of the process at work: whether it refers to the nuclearization of joint structures or to any other societal phenomenon. There may be also those "cutting off" points which substantiate, explicitly, the process of nuclearization. For our purpose, therefore, the data on the incidence of nuclear and different varieties of joint family structure should be examined with reference to the "cutting off" points in operation.

At the present state of our knowledge, however, any such study will not be as precise as we may wish it to be. We have no comprehensive information on the incidence of nuclear and different varieties of joint family structures in India as a whole. We have less information on the actual operation of the "cutting off" points.⁴ For the present, therefore, we have no alternative to adopt an indirect approach and hypothesize successively on the probable "cutting off" points in light of the relevant information available.

³ The joint family under reference denotes that:

(1) a male, nevermarried or evermarried, belongs to the family of his parents and paternal ancestors, (2) a nevermarried female does the same, but (3) an evermarried female belongs to the family of her *husband's* parents and *his* paternal ancestors. The family is, therefore, labelled precisely as "patrilineal patrivirilocal" (Barnes, 1960: 850-866). In this monograph, however, the terms "patrilineal" and "patrilineal patrivirilocal" have been employed synonymously.

⁴ These points can be identified, and their frequency of occurrence can be ascertained, from a study of variations in the generational and collateral expansion of family structures in a society. Empirical investigations, however, are seldom undertaken in this respect although methods can be evolved for the purpose (Mukherjee, 1959: 133-140; 1969: 19-50).

The procedure may not yield an irrevocable answer to the question of nuclearization of joint families in India today. It will, however, provide guidelines to any course of research which may be undertaken to answer that question unambiguously. For an appraisal of the hypotheses on the probable "cutting off" points in the propagation of joint-family structures will help us to inquire into the meaning of the quantitative data put forward to substantiate the process of nuclearization.

Let us, therefore, visualize the proliferation of a patrilineally oriented family from its beginning when a man undergoes an "effective marriage" and begins to live with his wife.⁵ Since the ancestors of the man and the woman are not to be considered in the present context, the couple formed may be labelled as a "root couple". With respect to this couple, the family will extend generationally but *unilaterally* through the "sons" after their effective marriage, the "sons' sons" after their effective marriage, and so on. Correspondingly, the family will extend generationally and *collaterally* through a *set* of "root couples" of "brothers", the couples of their "sons", the couples of their "sons' sons", and so on.⁶ Propagating in this manner, a family can accommodate eventually all possible patrilineal male relatives and their wives. So that, unless there are selective processes at work to cut off the proliferation of the family at certain points of its generational and collateral expansion, it will be identical with the patrilineal kinship structure of the males in the family, with their wives in appendage.

This, obviously, is not the characteristic of family structures in India, as it is not in virtually all those societies which contain patrilineal-patrivirilocal joint families. Anyhow, the course of generational extension of a joint family must be limited because men must die. We, thus, find for India that one of the frequently imposed "cutting off" points is at the extension of a family beyond three generations. This is dictated by the demographic profile of the society, as explained below.

The age-tables, corrected for possible bias in reporting the age of an individual, point out that during 1911-1931 there was very little

⁵ In spite of the laws promulgated to raise the age of marriage, Indian boys and girls marry at an early age. This can be ascertained from the decennial census tables on marital-status and age-distribution of the Indian population. Usually, however, the girls married before attaining puberty stay in their parental families and begin to live with their husbands at a later age: the age of effective marriage. At that stage, the husbands may undergo a secondary marriage and bring their wives home.

⁶ The extension of the family tree of a person can also be described through his father, father's father, father's brothers, father's father's brothers, and so on. This, however, is implicit in the above description, *viz.*, the extension of the family tree from the point of view of the man's sons' sons or the man's brothers' sons' sons.

possibility for a man or a woman to belong to a family after the age of 64 years. During 1941-1961, the point of departure was raised to 69 years, while in 1901 the survival rate was low beyond the age of 59.

TABLE 1

FIVE-YEAR AGE-GROUP	NUMBER OF PERSONS PER 1,000						
	1901	1911	1921	1931	1941	1951	1961
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Males							
70 & above } 65-69 } 60-64 } 55-59 } 50-54 } 45-49 } 40-44 } 35-39 } 30-34 } 25-29 } 20-24 } 15-19 } 10-14 } 5- 9 } 0- 4 }	46 26 18 44 37 65 61 85 88 79 87 126 139 125	22 26 18 43 38 63 62 83 90 82 85 117 138 133	24 27 18 43 39 62 64 83 87 78 84 124 147 120	21 19 23 33 42 55 64 79 86 90 89 120 132 147	17 12 19 27 46 36 55 66 76 83 86 113 137 132	21 13 20 28 46 37 55 64 73 81 89 114 127 131	15 13 19 27 43 51 60 70 78 86 98 113 131 162
TOTAL:	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Females							
70 & above } 65-69 } 60-64 } 55-59 } 50-54 } 45-49 } 40-44 } 35-39 } 30-34 } 25-29 } 20-24 } 15-19 } 10-14 } 5- 9 } 0- 4 }	55 31 17 45 34 65 56 85 90 89 84 108 138 134	24 31 16 44 34 63 56 84 91 93 83 100 138 143	26 30 17 44 35 62 56 83 88 89 81 108 149 132	22 19 23 31 39 51 60 76 87 98 94 112 128 160	16 13 20 27 43 53 63 76 87 90 93 108 136 140	23 14 21 28 43 51 61 72 82 91 100 113 129 137	18 13 19 25 32 40 47 57 69 78 87 98 114 134 169
TOTAL:	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Females per 1,000 males							
Sex-ratio	972	964	955	950	945	946	941

The percentage-share of any one of the 5-year age-groups which are lumped together is less than 1.

SOURCE: 1961 Census of India 1963: 100; 1951 Census of India 1954: 144, 146, 168, 170; ISI 1958: 30; Desai 1969: 3.

Throughout the period of 1901-1961, the age of effective marriage of the two sexes and their fertility performance have remained fairly constant. Variations due to rural-urban differentiation also are not marked. Furthermore, inter-state differences, although present, are not of any substantial magnitude in the context of our present discussion. These are not shown in Table 2 but can be ascertained from the series of tables given in Draft Report 175 of the Government of India, National Sample Survey (NSS 1967: 27-344). Table 2, which gives the pooled information for all states and union territories of India, refers to a random sample survey of couple fertility conducted during September, 1961-July, 1962 (NSS 1967: 1-4, 345-348).

TABLE 2

MARRIAGE PERIOD	AVERAGE AGE (IN YEARS) AT EFFECTIVE MARRIAGE		AVERAGE NUMBER OF CHILDREN BORN PER COUPLE	AGE OF THE MAN AT THE BIRTH OF HIS CHILDREN (IN YEARS)			
	Woman	Man		First	Second	Third	Fourth
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Rural							
1961-62	16.11	21.79	0.09	23.88	26.22	—	—
1956-60	16.41	21.90	0.98	24.17	26.35	28.24	30.32
1951-55	16.05	21.72	2.38	24.79	27.36	29.80	32.04
1946-50	15.76	21.70	3.52	25.08	27.85	30.49	33.07
1941-45	15.81	21.80	4.28	25.70	28.79	31.70	34.40
1931-40	15.79	21.86	4.71	26.06	29.31	32.43	35.45
1921-30	15.62	21.60	4.66	26.12	29.56	32.90	36.11
1920-before	15.29	20.83	4.42	25.87	29.61	33.21	36.58
TOTAL: (sample)	15.86 (52,338)	21.68 (50,555)	3.33 (43,291)	25.61 (43,545)	28.67 (36,129)	31.66 (29,117)	34.57 (22,671)
Urban							
1961-62	17.42	23.96	0.08	25.34	27.40	—	—
1956-60	16.65	22.89	1.08	24.93	26.99	28.80	30.33
1951-55	16.20	22.68	2.54	25.32	27.83	30.20	32.42
1946-50	15.73	22.89	3.69	25.80	28.55	31.15	33.58
1941-45	15.74	22.89	4.54	26.06	28.91	31.66	34.36
1931-40	15.57	22.75	5.02	26.22	29.29	32.26	35.16
1921-30	15.35	22.51	4.85	26.41	29.57	32.67	35.70
1920-before	15.10	22.04	4.32	26.61	30.30	33.76	37.13
TOTAL: (sample)	15.88 (35,129)	22.77 (33,962)	3.49 (35,714)	25.96 (29,427)	28.86 (24,684)	31.70 (19,898)	34.49 (15,579)

SOURCE: NSS, 1967: 34, 51, 87-88, 192, 209, 247-248 for the reproduction of the data in cols. 2-4 and the computation of the data in cols. 5-8.

From the totals under cols. 2 and 3 of Table 2 it is seen that: (1) there is an average age-difference of 5 years between a husband and a wife, and (2) a man begins to cohabit with his wife (evidently by bringing her to his home) when he is in the age-group of 20-24 years and his wife in that of 15-19. From the totals under cols. 5 and 6 of Table 2 it is seen that when the husband is in the age-group of 25-29 years (and, correspondingly, the wife in that of 20-24) two children are born to them.

Now sex-ratio in India shows a slight preponderance of males, and the tendency appears to have gained ground over 1901-1961 (see the last row of Table 1). However, the difference in the size of male and female populations is still so small that during this period half the number of children born to a couple may be assumed, on an average, to be males and the other half females. The assumption is supported by the indication in col. 4 of Table 2 that the average number of children per couple after a full reproductive period, is 4. The small deviation of sex-ratio from equality will not, therefore, make any appreciable change in the expectation of equal number of male and female children to a couple.

We may also assume that there is no association between the birth-order of the children and their sex because the biological variation denotes a random process in the given societal context. The assumption is supported by the fact that a random sample of 54,310 couples in India, in 1961-62, which had produced at least two children, indicate almost equal probability for the children to be male-male (MM), male-female (MF), female-male (FM), and female-female (FF), viz., MM=28%, MF=28%, FM=23%, FF=21% (Halder and Bhattacharya, 1969: 11, for the computation of couple frequencies). Thus, as representing the average characteristic for the society, we may consider that out of the two children born to a man of 25-29 and his wife of 20-24, one is a son and the other is a daughter.

Schematically, therefore, the generational extension of the patrilineally oriented family of an average Indian may be described as follows:

(1) A "root couple" is formed, or a male member of an already functioning patrilineal-patrivirilocal joint family creates condition for its propagation by forming a "subsidiary couple" in the unit, when the husband is in the age-group of 20-24 years and his wife in that of 15-19.

(2) The husband and the wife become "parents" for the first time when the man is in the age-group of 25-29 and the woman in that of 20-24.

(3) Following the trend, they become "grandparents" for the first time when the man is in the age-group of 45-49 and his wife in that of 40-44. But they assume this role through their first daughter who, at the age of 20-24 years and her husband at 25-29, become "parents" for the first time. This, therefore, does not effect a generational extension of the patrilineal-patrivirilocal family of the man and woman under reference. The extension takes place when the man is in the age-group of 50-54, the woman in that of 45-49, and their first son in the age-group of 25-29 becomes a "parent" for the first time with his wife in the age-group of 20-24.

(4) Sequentially, the next generational extension of the family will take place when the man is in the age-group of 75-79 and the woman in that of 70-74. These age-groups, however, are seldom reached by the Indian people even now: the prospect was worse in earlier times.

Thus, very few men and women remain alive to continue with their familial bond and to see the face of their "son's son" whether or not their psychology desires it and the society upholds an appropriate set of values.⁷ The family, however, may maintain its structural unity after the first set of "root couples" of the man and his brothers has passed away, each "root couple" being represented by the "husband" and/or the "wife". The link among its members will, then, be through those surviving couples which will emerge, sequentially, as "root couples" for the family. The couples formed by the sons of the deceased man and his brothers will, firstly, assume this role. After their disappearance from the social scene, the couples formed by their sons will assume that role, and so on. The joint families, consequently, may go on expanding within a limited generational extension and be identified, ultimately, with the patrilineal kinship structure of the males in respective units. We should, therefore, propose a number of hypotheses which, in their sequence: (1) restrict more and more the proliferation of joint families, (2) lead in due course to the formation of nuclear units by the segmentation of joint structures, and (3) transform ultimately all joint families into nuclear families.

⁷ While we have little knowledge on variations due to the number of generations involved in the composition of family structures in India, whatever information we have shows that 4-generation structures (which subsume "great-grandparental" and/or the corresponding avuncular relationships) are rarely found in the society. Within the samples of 84 families of the Pandits of Kashmir (Madan, 1965: 66-69), 160 families of the Rabhas of Assam (Das, 1957: 119-123), and 151 families of the Thetaris of Orissa (Chakrabarti—unpublished), none was found to be of a 4-generation structure. Also, the random sample survey of 4,120 family-units in West Bengal (mentioned in note 1) brought out only 3 per cent of the extended families to be of 4-generation structures.

These hypotheses will constitute the frame of reference we require to evaluate the data available on nuclear and joint family structures in India. For that purpose, we shall have to build a model in terms of the operating role of the hypotheses in the society. Firstly, therefore, we should evolve a method in order to estimate the operating capacity of different hypotheses.⁸

IV

At one end of the range of hypotheses which will go into the construction of the frame of reference we have spoken earlier, we may conceive of the following situation: The family of the passed away first set of "root couples" (of a man and his brothers) maintains its structural unity so long as at least one of the second set of "root couples" (represented by their "sons") is present in the social scene. This situation will represent an extreme possibility to retain the joint family structure in contemporary India since: (1) the maximum expansion of collateral relationship in a family will, then, be registered between two cousins related as "father's father's father's father's brother's son's son's son's son or daughter", and (2) an expansion of collateral relationships beyond this range is hardly ever met within any joint family in India. How this extent of inter-cousin relationship will be registered in a patrilineal-patrivirilocal joint family is explained by the demographic profile of the society, as described below.

It is seen from col. 4 of Table 2 that a full reproductive period after effective marriage produces, on an average, 4 children. Columns 5-8 of the table show that the first two children are born when the husband is in the age-group of 25-29 years, and the next two when he is in the age-group of 30-34. We have already assumed, on valid theoretical and practical grounds, that out of the first two children one is a son and the other a daughter. We may assume on same grounds that the second set of two children also consists of one son and one daughter. So that the development of the patrilineal-patrivirilocal joint family may be schematized as follows:

(1) Since the average age of effective marriage for a man is 20-24 and for his wife 15-19, the youngest couple formed in the society may be denoted by c_{20} .

(2) At the next age-group, each c_{25} couple will have a son and a daughter in the age-group of 0-4 years. Since the females born in the family need not be considered for the proliferation of a patrilineal-

⁸ In case the reader is not interested to learn how this frame of reference has been designed, he may skip over sections IV-VIII of this monograph. Tables 5 and 7-12 are, however, essential to follow subsequent discussions.

patrivirilocal structure, we may consider only the sons born to a couple and denote the 0-4 year old son by Z_0 .

(3) Correspondingly, each c_{30} couple will have 2 sons as Z_5 and Z_0 , each c_{35} couple as Z_{10} and Z_5 , and each c_{40} couple as Z_{15} and Z_{10} .

(4) A c_{45} couple will have a son as Z_{20} and another as Z_{15} . That is, each c_{45} couple will be associated with a C_{20} subsidiary couple and one Z_{15} son, since the first son will also form a couple.

(5) On the same basis, each c_{50} couple will be associated with 2 subsidiary couples of c_{25} and c_{20} , together with the progeny of c_{25} ; each c_{55} couple with c_{30} and c_{25} , together with their progeny; each c_{60} couple with c_{35} and c_{30} , together with their progeny; and each c_{65} couple with c_{40} and c_{35} , together with their progeny.

(6) A c_{70} couple will be associated with two subsidiary couples of c_{45} and c_{40} , while the progeny of the c_{45} couple will refer to another subsidiary couple of c_{20} and Z_{15} . The progeny of the c_{40} subsidiary couple will refer to Z_{15} and Z_{10} .

(7) We do not have to consider couples older than c_{70} because: (i) a c_{70} couple will be represented by a man in the age-group of 70-74 and/or his wife in that of 65-69, and (ii) even in 1961 the probability of survival of an individual beyond 69 is negligible.

We may repeat, in order to avoid any confusion, that the above course of development of the patrilineal-patrilocal joint family indicates the average characteristics for the Indian society. To be sure, some men and women marry earlier or later than the age-groups mentioned in their respective cases, and some of them (very few indeed) do not marry at all.⁹ Also, a couple may not produce any child or

⁹ The following table supplies the necessary information for recent times :

AGE-GROUP	PERCENTAGE OF NEVERMARRIED TO TOTAL NUMBER OF PERSONS			
	1961		1951	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
15-19	76	29	54	17
20-24	44	6		
25-29	18	2	13	3
30-34	8	1		
35-39	5	0	5	2
40-44	4	0		
70 and above	3	0	3	1
75 and above				

"0" denotes less than 1 per cent incidence.

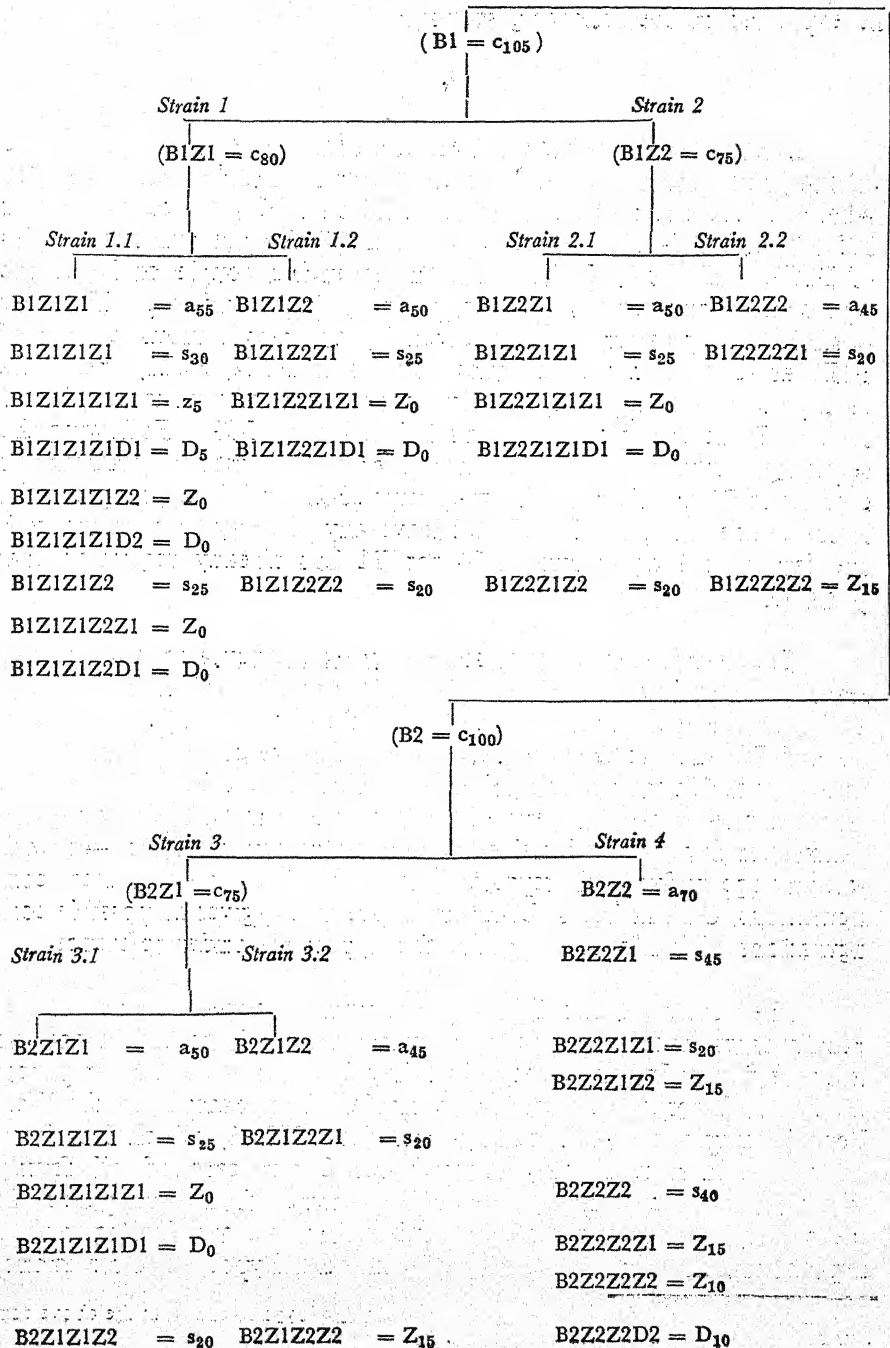
SOURCE: *Census of India* 1951, 1953: 146-156; *Census of India* 1961, 1965: Vol. I, Part II-C(i), 20-21.

many more than 4, and these children may be born at an earlier or a much later age than that stated for the "husband-father". Moreover, the presence of an older couple is not always complemented by the presence of its scheduled progeny; as for example, a c_{70} couple may not be associated invariably with a c_{45} , c_{40} , c_{20} , Z_{15} twice, Z_{10} , and D_{10} (for unmarried "daughters"). Conversely, the presence of a younger couple or of unmarried persons in the absence of their respective "parental couples" need not be associated always with the corresponding absence of the "grandparental couples"; as for example, the presence of a c_{20} in the absence of its "parental couple" of c_{45} may not invariably denote the absence of the "grandparental couple" of c_{70} . Lastly, although with sharply reduced probability, a few couples of c_{75} to c_{100} may be found in the society. However, the schematic development of the patrilineal-patrivirilocal joint family, which we have outlined above, denotes the central tendency for the Indian society and thus conforms to the hypothetical situation envisaged.

We may, therefore, state according to the scheme that the first set of "root couples", which has passed away, will be represented by the couples of two brothers, say, B1 and B2. Correspondingly, the least possible representation of the second set of "root couples" in the family will be denoted by the stage at which: (1) the couples of the two sons of B1 (=B1Z1 and B1Z2, say) have passed away, (2) the couple of first son of B2 (=B2Z1, say) has also passed away, and (3) the couple of the second son of B2 (=B2Z2, say) is in the age-group of 70-74 years and, thus, at the last stage of its existence in the family. The maximum possible proliferation of the patrilineal-patrivirilocal joint family at this stage is shown in Diagram I (see p. 55) in which the posthumous couples are placed within brackets, the "root couples" denoting the respective "familial strains" are distinguished from the other couples by the letter "a" with relevant age-suffixes, and the couples subsidiary to the "root couples" are denoted by the letter "s" with appropriate age-suffixes.

It will be seen from the diagram that the maximum distance of inter-cousin relationships in the family will be recorded as "father's father's father's brother's son's son's son's son or daughter" between any one denoted by Z_5 , D_5 , Z_0 , or D_0 under strains 1.1, 1.2 or 2.1, on the one hand, and the corresponding Z_0 or D_0 under the strain 3.1, on the other. Thus, if we formulate a hypothesis that the "sons" of all deceased couples of brothers live together (with their consorts and progeny) and along with the consorts and progeny of those "sons" who have also passed away, we postulate a contemporary situation in which the patrilineal-patrivirilocal joint family structure

DIAGRAM I



is maintained with the utmost intensity. However, under this situation also, nuclear units will occur in the society in an appreciable number as explained in the following section.¹⁰

V

In Diagram I, we have shown one of the possible configurations of the joint family according to the hypothesis under reference, viz., when: (1) the posthumous couples of B1 and B2 refer to age-groups 105-109 and 100-104, respectively, and (2) the posthumous couples of B1Z1, B1Z2, and B2Z1, and the surviving couple of B2Z2 are represented, respectively, by (c_{80}) , (c_{75}) , (c_{75}) , and a_{70} . The next possible configuration will be given by the posthumous couple of B1Z1 as (c_{75}) , and the surviving couples of B1Z2, B2Z1, and B2Z2 as a_{70} , a_{70} , and a_{65} , respectively, with the posthumous couples of B1 and B2 referring to age-groups 100-104 and 95-99. Following the sequence, a total of 17 configurations are possible, until the posthumous couples of B1 and B2 refer to age-groups 25-29 and 20-24, respectively. A lower age-group for B1 cannot leave any progeny to continue with the family; the age-group 20-24 for B2 has already registered that position.

The "familial strains" of some of these configurations will not be represented exclusively, or at all, by the "root couples" of B1Z1, B1Z2, B2Z1, and B2Z2. For, in these cases, the posthumous couples of B1 and B2 will not refer, respectively, to the age-groups of 45-49 and above, at which their sons also will have formed couples of their own. Nevermarried males (as denoted by the letter 'm' with relevant age-suffixes) or nevermarried males and females (as denoted by 'm + f' with relevant age-suffixes) will represent the "familial strain(s)" of these configurations. On this basis, Diagram II (see p. 57) gives all possible configurations of family structure for the hypothesis under reference.

The configurations 14-17 in Diagram II appear to be unreal. Family-units formed by young and unmarried siblings and/or cousins is a rare find in Indian society. But they do occur, although empirical data in their respect are seldom available. For example, in the West Bengal sample of 4,120 family-units for 1960-61, which has been mentioned in note 1, they account for 2 per cent of all family structures. We cannot, therefore, ignore their emergence in the society. Moreover, as explained earlier, we are dealing with a hypothetical situation (and shall deal with other hypothetical situations)

¹⁰ If the reader is not interested in the method employed to arrive at the above conclusion, he may skip over the following section.

DIAGRAM II

CONFIGURATIONS OF FAMILY STRUCTURE FOR THE HYPOTHESIS	HYPOTHESIS 1									
	Strains of the family previously formed by the couples of B1 and B2 and presently represented by their sons (and daughters) or grandsons									
	B1Z1	B1Z2	B2Z1	B2Z2	B1 Z1Z1	B1 Z1Z2	B1 Z2Z1	B1 Z2Z2	B2 Z1Z1	B2 Z1Z2
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
1	(c ₈₀)	(c ₇₅)	(c ₇₅)	a ₇₀	a ₅₅	a ₅₀	a ₅₀	a ₄₅	a ₅₀	a ₄₅
2	(c ₇₅)	a ₇₀	a ₇₀	a ₆₅	a ₅₀	a ₄₅				
3	a ₇₀	a ₆₅	a ₆₅	a ₆₀						
4	a ₆₅	a ₆₀	a ₆₀	a ₅₅						
5	a ₆₀	a ₅₅	a ₅₅	a ₅₀						
6	a ₅₅	a ₅₀	a ₅₀	a ₄₅						
7	a ₅₀	a ₄₅	a ₄₅	a ₄₀						
8	a ₄₅	a ₄₀	a ₄₀	a ₃₅						
9	a ₄₀	a ₃₅	a ₃₅	a ₃₀						
10	a ₃₅	a ₃₀	a ₃₀	a ₂₅						
11	a ₃₀	a ₂₅	a ₂₅	a ₂₀						
12	a ₂₅	a ₂₀	a ₂₀	m ₁₅						
13	a ₂₀	m ₁₅	m ₁₅	m+f ₁₀						
14	m ₁₅	m+f ₁₀	m+f ₁₀	m+f ₅						
15	m+f ₁₀	m+f ₅	m+f ₅	m+f ₀						
16	m+f ₅	m+f ₅	m+f ₀	—						
17	m+f ₀	—	—	—						

for which it is appropriate to take note of the above and similarly possible configurations of family structures. We shall have to estimate, therefore, the independent occurrence of "familial strains" in Indian society as denoted by: (1) the "root couples" $a_{20} \dots a_{70}$, (2) the unmarried "sons" $m_0 \dots m_{15}$, and (3) the unmarried "daughters" $f_0 \dots f_{10}$. Obviously, f_{15} "daughters" do not come into our consideration because, like m_{20} , they are evermarried according to our schema.

The course of estimation must conform to the average characteristics of propagation of the patrilineal-patrivirilocal joint families and the hypothetical situation envisaged. There will be, therefore, the following basic assumptions which are dimensionally true for the Indian society and particularly appropriate to the hypothesis under reference and those which will be brought under reference later:

(1) All males in the age-group of 20-24 and above are evermarried, as are all females in the age-group of 15-19 and above.

(2) A "husband" belongs to the next 5-year age-group from that of his "wife".

(3) An elder "brother" belongs to the next 5-year age-group from that of his younger "brother".

(4) A "father" is 25-29 and 30-34 years senior to his "first son or daughter" and "second son or daughter", respectively, and a "mother" is correspondingly 20-24 and 25-29 years senior to her "first-son or daughter" and "second son or daughter".

(5) In the course of propagation of a family according to the reproductive characteristics of the people and their sex and age-specific mortality, the "root couples" represent the respective "familial strains" in full (e.g., a_{70} represent completely the strain 4 shown in Diagram I).

(6) In the absence of the "parental couples", the "root couples" and the corresponding unmarried "sons" and "daughters" subsume the absence of their "grandparental couples" (e.g., a_{20} subsumes the absence of a_{70} along with a_{45} , m_{15} subsumes the absence of a_{70} and a_{65} along with a_{45} and a_{40} , and so on).

(7) The incidence of male and female population beyond the age of 69 can be neglected from our consideration.

Under the above assumptions, the independent occurrence of $a_{70} \dots a_{20}$, $m_{15} \dots m_0$, and $f_{10} \dots f_0$ may be estimated for the Indian society in the following manner:¹¹

Let the total population in Indian society for the year under reference (say, 1961) be denoted by P , of which the male population is p and the female population p' . That is, $P = (p + p')$.

Let p_i be the male population in the i -th age-group of 5 years each. The relative incidence of male population in the i -th age-group will, then, be given by $t_i = (p_i/P)$.

Let p'_i be the female population in the i -th age-group. The relative incidence of female population in that age-group will, then, be given by $t'_i = (p'_i/P)$.

Let \bar{t}_i and \bar{t}'_i be the average values of t_i and t'_i respectively, for the number of years for which data are available (say, from 1901 to

¹¹ I am indebted to Prof. B. P. Adhikari of the Research and Training School of the Indian Statistical Institute for his guidance in developing the following procedure.

the year under reference). So that these two average values may take note of any differential mortality of males and females in the society over a long period.¹² We shall use these average age-compositions for the calculation of survival probabilities in due course.

Then:

(1) The incidence of unmarried "sons" in the j -th age-group will be given by t_j for j varying from 0 to 15.

(2) The incidence of unmarried "daughters" will be given, correspondingly, by t'_j for j varying from 0 to 10.

(3) The incidence of "husbands" (with or without their "wives") in the j -th age-group will be given by t_j for j varying from 20 to 65.

(4) The corresponding incidence of "wives" without their "husbands" will be given by $[t'_{(j-5)}(h_j)]$ for j varying from 20 to 70, where:

$$h_j = \frac{\sum_{i=20}^{j-5} t_i}{\sum_{i=20}^{65} t_i}$$

since the probability of males (as "husbands") not reaching the age-level of j will be estimated by h_j and this will be 0 for the particular value of $j=20$.

(5) The incidence of couples c_j will be given by adding the above incidence of "husbands" (with or without their "wives") to that of the "wives" without their "husbands".

It follows from the above that the total incidence of "familial constituents" in the society, viz., unmarried "sons", unmarried "daughters", and evermarried couples, will be given by:

$$F = \sum_{j=0}^{15} t_j + \sum_{j=0}^{10} t'_j + \sum_{j=20}^{70} c_j$$

and the relative incidence of these "familial constituents", which may be denoted by the letters u , v , and w for unmarried "sons", unmarried "daughters", and evermarried couples, respectively, will be given by:

$$u_j = (t_j/F), \text{ for } j \text{ varying from 0 to 15,}$$

$$v_j = (t'_j/F), \text{ for } j \text{ varying from 0 to 10,}$$

$$w_j = (c_j/F), \text{ for } j \text{ varying from 20 to 70.}$$

¹² Differential mortality of males and females can be estimated more precisely on the basis of detailed age-structures of the population over the last 69 years from the year under reference. However, in light of the amount of labour involved in computing these age-structures by the method of interpolation between decennial census counts and the assumptions involved in that procedure, the gain in precision will be negligible.

Each of these "familial constituents", however, may occur in the society in two ways. It may represent a specific strain of the family as a "root couple" or the corresponding unmarried "son" or "daughter" (with *both* parents dead), as shown in Diagram II. Alternatively, it may form a part of the familial strain represented by its "parental couple". In the former capacity, again, the incidence of the "familial constituents" will be related to the non-surviving "parental couples" in either of two ways:

(1) If the "husband" of a "root couple" is the first son of his parents (or if the corresponding unmarried "son" or "daughter" is the first son or daughter of his/her parents), the non-surviving "parental couple" would have belonged to the age-group of $(j+25)$ with reference to the age-group j for the "husband", "son", or "daughter".

(2) If the "husband", "son", or "daughter" is the second son or daughter of his/her parents, the non-surviving "parental couple" would have belonged to the age-group of $(j+30)$.

Since in our schema the first and second sons (and daughters) are born when the father is in the age-group 25-29 and 30-34, respectively, each of the "familial constituent"—groups will be the "first son/daughter type" or the "second son/daughter type" in the proportion of \bar{t}_{25} to \bar{t}_{30} , and this for each age-group j . So that, in light of the previously stated assumption that the average past age-composition will represent the same at different time points in the past, each of the proportions u_j , v_j , and w_j will have to be partitioned in the ratio $\bar{t}_{25} : \bar{t}_{30}$.

We find, concurrently, that the probability of a "parental couple" not reaching the respective age-group of $(j+25)$ or $(j+30)$ —after having passed the age-group of 25-29 or 30-34, with respect to the "husbands" of these couples, in order to produce the first or the second set of "sons" and "daughter"—will be given by e_j or e'_j , respectively, where:

$$e_j = k \left(\frac{\sum_{i=25}^{j+20} \bar{t}_i}{\sum_{i=25}^{j+25} \bar{t}_i} \right) \left(\frac{\sum_{i=15}^{j+15} \bar{t}_i}{\sum_{i=15}^{j+20} \bar{t}_i} \right),$$

$$e'_j = k \left(\frac{\sum_{i=30}^{j+25} \bar{t}_i}{\sum_{i=30}^{j+30} \bar{t}_i} \right) \left(\frac{\sum_{i=20}^{j+20} \bar{t}_i}{\sum_{i=20}^{j+25} \bar{t}_i} \right),$$

k being a constant of proportionality.

Therefore, the proportion of those "familial constituents" who are, on the one hand, "first son/daughter" or "second son/daughter"

types and have, on the other, already lost both parents, will be obtained by multiplying each of the numbers u_j , v_j , and w_j by $(k' \cdot \bar{t}_{25} \cdot e_j)$ and $(k' \cdot \bar{t}_{30} \cdot e'_j)$, respectively. Let the resultant numbers be denoted, respectively, by u'_j , v'_j , and w'_j .

Since our ultimate objective is to estimate the distribution of *relative* incidence of "root couples" and the corresponding unmarried "sons" and "daughters" in the society, the constants k and k' may be ignored. So that the incidence of the above "familial constituents", designated as the first or the second "son"-type (=Z1 or Z2) and as the first or the second "daughter"-type (=D1 or D2) of the "parental couples", will be given by:

$$u'(Z1)_j = u_j (\bar{t}_{25}) e_j, \text{ for } j \text{ varying from } 0 \text{ to } 15,$$

$$u'(Z2)_j = u_j (\bar{t}_{30}) e'_j, \text{ for } j \text{ varying from } 0 \text{ to } 15,$$

$$v'(D1)_j = v_j (\bar{t}_{25}) e_j, \text{ for } j \text{ varying from } 0 \text{ to } 10,$$

$$v'(D2)_j = v_j (\bar{t}_{30}) e'_j, \text{ for } j \text{ varying from } 0 \text{ to } 10,$$

$$w'(Z1)_j = w_j (\bar{t}_{25}) e_j, \text{ for } j \text{ varying from } 20 \text{ to } 70,$$

$$w'(Z2)_j = w_j (\bar{t}_{30}) e'_j, \text{ for } j \text{ varying from } 20 \text{ to } 70,$$

and the total of the incidence of all these "familial constituents" in the society will be given by R , say.

Following therefrom, the relative incidence of u'_j in the society as m_j , of v'_j as f_j , and of w'_j as a_j , will be given by:

$$m_j(Z1) = [u'(Z1)_j/R], \quad m_j(Z2) = [u'(Z2)_j/R],$$

$$f_j(D1) = [v'(D1)_j/R], \quad f_j(D2) = [v'(D2)_j/R],$$

$$a_j(Z1) = [w'(Z1)_j/R], \quad a_j(Z2) = [w'(Z2)_j/R].$$

The independent occurrence of the "root couples" and the corresponding unmarried "sons" and "daughters" in the society can thus be estimated by following the procedure outlined above.¹³ This is done in Table 3 (see p. 62) with reference to the years 1941, 1951, and 1961 because the empirical data on variations in family structures in Indian society hardly ever refer to a period earlier than 1941. It will

¹³ The estimation of a_{20} , m_{15} , m_{10} , m_5 , f_{10} , and f_5 in this manner will take into account the absence of the "parental couple" but not necessarily of the "grandparental couple". The absence of the latter is, of course, subsumed in the schema. Additionally, it will be evident from the adopted process of estimation that even if the assumption was withdrawn and these "familial constituents" were to refer exclusively to the absence of both the parental and grandparental couples, the change in the estimated values would have been none or negligible up to the fourth decimal place.

be seen from the table that the corresponding values for the three years are so close that their averages given in cols. 8 and 9 of the table can satisfactorily represent the situation for the period 1941-61.

TABLE 3

FAMILIAL CONSTITUENTS	1941		1951		1961		1941-61	
	Z1/D1 Type	Z2/D2 Type	Z1/D1 Type	Z2/D2 Type	Z1/D1 Type	Z2/D2 Type	Z1/D1 Type	Z2/D2 Type
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
a_{70}	.010 8	.006 6	.010 8	.006 6	.011 4	.006 9	.011 0	.006 7
a_{65}	.026 9	.016 5	.028 4	.017 4	.028 5	.017 3	.027 9	.017 1
a_{60}	.037 7	.023 1	.039 5	.024 1	.038 7	.023 5	.038 6	.023 6
a_{55}	.049 6	.030 3	.051 0	.031 1	.050 4	.030 6	.050 3	.030 7
a_{50}	.060 5	.037 0	.062 0	.037 8	.060 6	.036 8	.061 0	.037 2
a_{45}	.070 9	.044 4	.070 1	.043 9	.068 9	.042 8	.070 0	.043 7
a_{40}	.072 6	.047 8	.072 0	.047 3	.071 1	.046 2	.071 9	.047 1
a_{35}	.072 5	.047 9	.069 9	.046 0	.069 8	.045 7	.070 7	.046 5
a_{30}	.063 9	.042 9	.061 2	.041 1	.062 1	.041 5	.062 4	.041 8
a_{25}	.048 8	.033 4	.047 8	.032 8	.048 8	.033 1	.048 5	.033 1
a_{20}	.032 2	.022 6	.033 2	.023 3	.034 0	.023 7	.033 1	.023 2
m_{15}	.023 0	.016 5	.024 3	.017 4	.025 0	.017 8	.024 1	.017 2
m_{10}	.013 8	.010 4	.013 7	.010 3	.014 4	.010 7	.014 0	.010 5
m_5	.004 4	.003 7	.004 1	.003 3	.004 4	.003 7	.004 3	.003 6
m_0	.000 0	.000 0	.000 0	.000 0	.000 0	.000 0	.000 0	.000 0
f_{10}	.012 4	.009 3	.012 8	.009 7	.013 7	.010 2	.013 0	.009 7
f_5	.004 1	.003 5	.004 0	.003 1	.004 2	.003 5	.004 1	.003 4
f_0	.000 0	.000 0	.000 0	.000 0	.000 0	.000 0	.000 0	.000 0

Now, we have seen from Diagram II that for the hypothesis under reference, the "root couples" denoted by $(a_{70} \dots a_{60})$ and $(a_{40} \dots a_{20})$, and further distinguished as of Z1 and Z2 types, occur twice, respectively. Those unmarried "sons" and "daughters" who correspond to all "root couples" also occur twice, respectively. The a_{55} (Z1) couples, on the other hand, occur 3 times but a_{55} (Z2) twice; a_{50} (Z1) couples occur 5 times but a_{50} (Z2) thrice; and a_{45} (Z1) couples occur twice but a_{45} (Z2) 5 times. Since each of these "familial constituents" will occur under relevant configurations of family structure with equal chance, its rate of incidence for an occurrence is obtained by dividing its estimated value in Table 3 by its number of occurrence under different configurations. Table 4 (see p. 63) has been prepared on this basis to

reproduce the configurations shown in Diagram II. The data for the table refer to the average values given in cols. 8 and 9 of Table 3 for 1941-61.

TABLE 4

CONFIGURATIONS OF FAMILY STRUCTURE FOR THE HYPOTHESIS	HYPOTHESIS- 1									
	1941-61 average incidence-rates of "root couples" and unmarried "sons" and "daughters" under "familial strains" shown in Diagram II									
	B1		B1		B1		B1		B2	
	B1Z1	B1Z2	B2Z1	B2Z2	Z1Z1	Z1Z2	Z2Z1	Z2Z2	Z1Z1	Z1Z2
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
1	—	—	—	.003 4	.016 8	.012 4	.012 2	.008 8	.012 2	.008 8
2	—	.003 3	.005 5	.008 5	.012 2	.008 7				
3	.005 5	.008 6	.014 0	.011 8						
4	.013 9	.011 8	.019 3	.015 4						
5	.019 3	.015 3	.016 7	.012 4						
6	.016 8	.012 4	.012 2	.008 7						
7	.012 2	.008 7	.035 0	.023 5						
8	.035 0	.023 6	.036 0	.023 3						
9	.035 9	.023 2	.035 3	.020 9						
10	.035 4	.020 9	.031 2	.016 5						
11	.031 2	.016 6	.024 3	.011 6						
12	.024 2	.011 6	.016 5	.008 6						
13	.016 6	.008 6	.012 1	.010 1						
14	.012 0	.010 1	.013 5	.003 5						
15	.013 5	.003 5	.004 2	.000 0						
16	.004 2	.000 0	.000 0	—						
17	.000 0	—	—	—						

For configuration 1 in Table 4, the minimum value recorded is 0.003 4. To this extent, therefore, the family structure left by the couples of B1 and B2 will maintain its structural unity at the maximum possible coverage of generational and collateral expansions. That is, by representing all the strains denoted by the "root couples" of B2Z2 (a_{70}), B1Z1Z1 (a_{55}), B1Z1Z2 (a_{50}), B1Z2Z1 (a_{50}), B1Z2Z2 (a_{45}), B2Z1Z1 (a_{50}), and B2Z1Z2 (a_{45}), the family will comprise 4 generation-levels and register the fourth degree inter-cousin relationship. It will, however, be seen from the table that this minimum value is represented by the strain headed by the couple of B2Z2, and the next higher value is represented by the strains headed by the couples of B1Z2Z2 and B2Z1Z2. The difference between the two values (= 0.0054) will, therefore, represent the ancestral family from which

the strain headed by the couple of B2Z2 is removed by demographic exigencies. Proceeding in this manner, and thus successively eliminating the strains headed by B1Z2Z2, B2Z1Z2, B1Z2Z1, B2Z1Z1, and B1Z1Z2, we find that the difference between the highest and the next lower value ($= 0.0044$) will represent the ancestral family by the 3-generation joint family of procreation of B1Z1Z1.

The procedure is applicable to all other configurations shown in Table 4. So that the last of the successively subtracted values for each configuration may refer exclusively to the family of procreation of one of the deceased brothers and denote thereby: (1) the collateral joint family formed by the sons or grandsons of that deceased brother, (2) the unilateral joint family of procreation of only one of the sons or grandsons, (3) the nuclear family of procreation formed by that son or grandson, (4) the nuclear family of the conjugal variety as formed by a son or grandson with his wife only, or (5) the nuclear family formed by a set of unmarried siblings.

Thus, the method evolved to exhibit the operating capacity of a hypothesis shows that although according to the hypothesis under reference the "sons" of deceased couples of brothers will sustain the ancestral collateral family, various forms of family structure are bound to emerge in Indian society and some of them will be nuclear.

VI

The method we have developed is applicable to all the hypotheses which may be formulated to specify "cutting off" points in the propagation of patrilineal-patrivirilocal joint family structures in India. We can, therefore, employ this method to ascertain the relative incidence of different forms of family structure which are scheduled to emerge in Indian society in terms of one hypothesis or another. And, for this purpose, we may use only the average values for 1941-61, as given in cols. 8 and 9 of Table 3, since these as well as the corresponding values of independent occurrence of the "familial constituents" in the respective years of 1941, 1951 and 1961 are very close to one another.

We shall begin with the examination of two hypotheses. The first, as we have explained, will represent one end of the range of hypotheses which will constitute the frame of reference to evaluate the data available on the relative incidence of nuclear and joint family structures in India. The second will register a slight variation from the first hypothesis on the way towards the other end of the range.

Hypothesis 1: The family of the passed away first set of "root couples" (of a man and his brothers) maintains its structural unity so long as at least one of the second set of "root couples" (represented by their "sons") is present in the social scene.

Hypothesis 2: "Sons" of the deceased couples of brothers live together with their consorts and progeny *but* the progeny of each of those "sons couples", which have also passed away, form separate families.

The procedure to estimate the relative incidence of different forms of family structure which will emerge in society due to the operation of hypothesis 1 has been shown. For hypothesis 2, the configurations 3-17 in Diagram II and Table 4 will remain the same as for hypothesis 1. The configurations 1 and 2 will be represented by cols. 2-5 of Diagram II and Table 4. Three more configurations will have to be taken into account to represent the strains of the family left with reference to configuration 1 by $B1Z1 = c_{80}$, $B1Z2 = c_{75}$, and $B2Z1 = c_{75}$. And the last additional configuration will refer to the strain of the family left in respect of configuration 2 by $B1Z1 = c_{75}$. The relative incidence of "root couples" for these 4 additional configurations will be given, respectively, by cols. 6-7, cols. 8-9, and cols. 10-11 of configuration 1, and cols. 6-7 of configuration 2, of Diagram II and Table 4.

On the above mentioned basis, the operating role of hypotheses 1 and 2 in Indian society are shown in Table 5.

TABLE 5

FORMS OF FAMILY STRUCTURE TO EMERGE IN INDIAN SOCIETY IN TERMS OF A HYPOTHESIS	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL INCIDENCE FOR HYPOTHESIS	
	1	2
(1)	(2)	(3)
4-generation collaterally joint	4	—
3- " " "	23	30
2- " " "	45	40
1- " " "	8	7
3-generation unilaterally joint	6	9
2- " " "	3	3
Nuclear: parent-child variety	6	6
" conjugal variety	1	1
" sibling variety	4	4
TOTAL :	100	100

The table shows that even if the central tendency in Indian society is to maintain the patrilineal-patrivirilocal joint family structure with the utmost intensity, about 11 per cent of the families will be nuclear during 1941-61. This rate of incidence is not altered by a slight variation in hypothetical situations. Only hypothesis 2 records no incidence of 4-generation collateral structures and registers, correspondingly, increase in the incidence of 3-generation structures (both collateral and unilateral) and a slight decrease in the incidence of 2-generation collateral structures. The role of hypothesis 2 is, thus, to effect variations within the circle of joint family structures from the arrangement scheduled by hypothesis 1.

With more information, the estimates can be made more precise. As such, however, they point out that we should continue with the examination of successively formulated hypotheses (starting from the extreme situation we have just analysed) in order that by the relative incidence of nuclear to joint structures we may eventually ascertain the quantitative indication of the stage which denotes a course of nuclearization of joint families. We may, therefore, propose the next two hypothetical situations, with a slight variation between them, as follows:

Hypothesis 3: From the collateral joint family formed by brothers' couples the "sons" of *each* couple form a separate family when that couple passes away, and these "sons" live together with their consorts and progeny and along with the progeny of those "sons" who (and whose wives) have also passed away.

Hypothesis 4: "Sons" of a deceased couple form a family, as per hypothesis 3, with their consorts and progeny *but* the progeny of each of those "sons" who (and whose wives) have also passed away form a separate family.

In the case of these two hypotheses also the central tendency of the society will be to maintain the patrilineal-patrivirilocal joint family structure but within more restricted scope of its proliferation than postulated for hypotheses 1 and 2. Because the family of procreation left by a couple, after death at an old age, will consist of couples of "sons" and "grandsons" along with great-grandchildren. For hypothesis 3, it may additionally consist of couples of "great-grandsons" if a "son's couple" also has passed away in ripe old age while at least another "son's couple" is present in the unit. However, as shown in Diagram II, for hypothesis 1, there may be 16 different configurations of family structures with reference to hypothesis 3. These are shown

in Table 6 along with the rate of incidence of the "root couples" and the corresponding unmarried "sons" and "daughters" for each configuration, as given in Table 4 for hypothesis 1.

TABLE 6

CONFIGURATIONS OF FAMILY STRUCTURE FOR THE HYPOTHESIS	HYPOTHESIS 3			
	Strains of the family previously formed by B_1 & B_2 and presently represented by B_1 's or B_2 's sons (& daughters) or grandsons, with the average incidence-rate of each strain for 1941-61 given in brackets			
	Z1	Z2	Z1Z1	Z1Z2
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
1	(c_{75})	a_{70} (.006 7)	a_{50} (.030 5)	a_{45} (.021 9)
2	a_{70} (.011 0)	a_{65} (.017 1)		
3	a_{65} (.027 9)	a_{60} (.023 6)		
4	a_{60} (.038 6)	a_{55} (.030 7)		
5	a_{55} (.050 3)	a_{50} (.037 2)		
6	a_{50} (.030 5)	a_{45} (.021 8)		
7	a_{45} (.070 0)	a_{40} (.047 1)		
8	a_{40} (.071 9)	a_{35} (.046 5)		
9	a_{35} (.070 7)	a_{30} (.041 8)		
10	a_{30} (.062 4)	a_{25} (.033 1)		
11	a_{25} (.048 5)	a_{20} (.023 2)		
12	a_{20} (.033 1)	m_{15} (.017 2)		
13	m_{15} (.024 1)	$m+f_{10}$ (.020 2)		
14	$m+f_{10}$ (.027 0)	$m+f_5$ (.007 0)		
15	$m+f_5$ (.008 4)	$m+f_0$ (.000 0)		
16	$m+f_0$ (.000 0)	—		

For hypothesis 4, the first configuration will be represented only by col. 3 of Table 6, and there will be an additional configuration given by the "root couples" in cols. 4 and 5 of the table for configuration 1. On this basis, and in the same manner as for Table 5, Table 7 (see p. 68) has been prepared. The table shows that further variations will take place within the circle of joint families because of the shift from hypothesis 3 to hypothesis 4, as noted for hypotheses 1 and 2. The table also shows that even when the tendency persists in society to maintain the patrilineal-patrivirilocal joint family structure, about 30 per cent of the total families will be nuclear owing to the characteristic demographic profile of India.

TABLE 7

FORMS OF FAMILY STRUCTURE TO EMERGE IN INDIAN SOCIETY IN TERMS OF A HYPOTHESIS	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL INCIDENCE FOR HYPOTHESIS	
	3	4
(1)	(2)	(3)
4-generation collaterally joint	1	—
3- " " "	23	23
2- " " "	31	31
1- " " "	3	3
3-generation unilaterally joint	8	9
2- " " "	4	
Nuclear : parent-child variety	18	18
" conjugal variety	3	3
" sibling variety	9	9
Non-familial (= 1-member) unit	0	0
TOTAL :	100	100

"0" denotes less than 1 per cent incidence. A "non-familial unit" refers to a person who has no kin or affine to form a nuclear or a patrilineal-patrivirilocal joint family.

We may propose two more hypotheses, with a slight variation between them, which also register the central tendency of the society to maintain the patrilineal-patrivirilocal joint family structure within furthermore restricted scope of its proliferation than for the previous four hypotheses. The situations envisaged will be as follows:

Hypothesis 5: "Sons" of a deceased couple, who had separated from the ancestral family as per hypothesis 4, live together with their consorts and progeny so long as *all* the "sons' couples" do not assume the role of grandparent with respect to their "first son's first child"; and, with the assumption of that role, the couples form their separate joint families of procreation.

Hypothesis 6: "Sons" of a deceased couple, who had separated from the ancestral family as per hypothesis 4, live together with their consorts and progeny so long as *each* "son's couple" does not assume the role of grandparent with respect to its "first son's first child" and, with the assumption of that role, the couple forms its joint family of procreation separately.

According to hypothesis 5, each of the "root couples" denoted by j varying from 55 to 70, as well as each a_{50} (Z2) couple, will form 3-generation unilaterally joint family. The remaining "root couples" and the corresponding unmarried "sons" and "daughters" will form the configurations 6-16 of Table 6. According to hypothesis 6, all "root couples" denoted by j , varying from 50 to 70 will form 3-generation unilaterally joint families, respectively. The a_{45} (Z2) couples will form 2-generation unilaterally joint families while the remaining "root couples" and the corresponding unmarried "sons" and "daughters" will form the configurations 7-16 of Table 6. So that the relative incidence of different forms of family structure in Indian society according to hypotheses 5 and 6 will be as given in Table 8.

TABLE 8

FORMS OF FAMILY STRUCTURE TO EMERGE IN INDIAN SOCIETY IN TERMS OF A HYPOTHESIS	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL INCIDENCE FOR HYPOTHESIS	
	5	6
(1)	(2)	(3)
3-generation collaterally joint	6	—
2- " " "	27	25
1- " " "	3	2
3-generation unilaterally joint	36	40
2- " " "	3	9
Nuclear : parent-child variety	15	15
" conjugal variety	2	2
" sibling variety	8	7
Non-familial (= 1-member) unit	0	0
TOTAL:	100	100

"0" denotes less than 1 per cent incidence.

The table shows that between hypotheses 5 and 6 their operating capacity is the same as between hypotheses 1 and 2, or 3 and 4: they refer to variations within the circle of joint families. Otherwise, it is seen that hypotheses 5 and 6 allow for a lower incidence-rate of nuclear units in the society than hypotheses 3 and 4. This is because there will be proportionately a large number of those joint families which are formed separately by each "root couple" in age-groups 55 and above for both hypotheses 5 and 6, by a_{50} (Z2) for hypothesis 5, and by all a_{50} couples for hypothesis 6.

Thus, the Tables 5, 7 and 8 tell us that the incidence of even 30 per cent of the total families in India as nuclear will not lead us to deduce *ipso facto* that the joint structures are being nuclearized. On the contrary, this incidence-rate may substantiate the fact that the joint family structure is maintained more forcefully, in conformity with hypothesis 3 or 4, than is required in pursuance of hypothesis 5 or 6.

VII

We may now examine a number of hypotheses which do not merely restrict the proliferation of collateral joint family structures. Instead, they will stipulate, on the one hand, the formation of nuclear units by the segmentation of joint structures and, on the other, the formation of joint families by these nuclear units in course of time. Thus, these hypotheses will denote what has been stated as a "change in type of joint family" from the traditional pattern which "consists of the head, his brothers, and their sons" to the "modern joint family" comprising "the head, his sons and grandsons" (Nimkoff, 1959: 34). With slight variations among them, these hypotheses may be formulated as follows:

Hypothesis 7: "Sons" of a deceased couple, who had separated from the ancestral family as per hypothesis 4, live together with their consorts (and children in the case of the senior "sons") so long as *all* the "sons' couples" have not assumed the parental role. At that stage, each couple forms its own family with children and eventually with grandchildren.

Hypothesis 8: "Sons" of a deceased couple, who had separated from the ancestral family as per hypothesis 4, live together with their consorts so long as *each* one of these sons' couples does not assume the parental role. At that stage, it forms its own family with children and eventually with grandchildren.

Hypothesis 9: "Sons" of a deceased couple, who had separated from the ancestral family as per hypothesis 4, live together (with the wives and children of the senior "sons") until *all* of them have undergone effective marriage. At that stage, each "son" forms his own family with wife, children, and eventually with grandchildren.

Hypothesis 10: "Sons" of a deceased couple, who had separated from the ancestral family as per hypothesis 4, live together until *each* one of them undergoes effective marriage and, then, that "son" forms his own family with wife, children, and eventually with grandchildren.

According to all the four hypotheses, each "root couple" in age-groups 50 and above will form 3-generation unilaterally joint family, and each a_{45} couple will form 2-generation unilaterally joint family. For hypothesis 7, the parent-child variety of nuclear family will be formed by each a_{40} , a_{35} , a_{30} , and a_{25} (Z2) couple, and the remaining "root couples" and corresponding unmarried "sons" and "daughters" will form the configurations 11-16 of Table 6. For hypotheses 8 and 9, respectively, each a_{40} , a_{35} , a_{30} , and a_{25} couple will form the parent-child variety of nuclear family, each a_{20} (Z2) couple will form the conjugal variety of nuclear family, and the remaining a_{20} (Z1) couples as well as the corresponding unmarried "sons" and "daughters" will form the configurations 12-16 of Table 6. For hypothesis 10 the arrangement will be the same as for hypotheses 8 and 9 except that: (1) each a_{20} (Z1) couple also will form the conjugal variety of nuclear family, (2) each m_{15} (Z2) "son" will be reduced to a *non-familial unit* as having no kin or affine to form a nuclear family or a patrilineal-patrivirilocal joint family, and (3) only the remaining unmarried "sons" and "daughters" will form the configurations 13-16 of Table 6.

On the above basis, the relative incidence of different forms of family structure in Indian society according to these four hypotheses will be as given in Table 9.

TABLE 9

FORMS OF FAMILY STRUCTURE TO EMERGE IN INDIAN SOCIETY IN TERMS OF A HYPOTHESIS	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL INCIDENCE FOR HYPOTHESIS			
	7	8	9	10
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
2-generation collaterally joint	2	—	—	—
1- " " "	2	2	2	—
3-generation unilaterally joint	33	32	32	31
2- " " "	12	12	12	12
Nuclear : parent-child variety	43	44	44	43
" conjugal variety	2	4	4	6
" sibling variety	6	6	6	6
Non-familial (= 1-member) unit	0	0	0	2
TOTAL :	100	100	100	100

"0" denotes less than 1 per cent incidence.

The table shows that the operating capacity of the four hypotheses 7-10 varies little with reference to the emergence of joint family structures in the society and they lead to the formation of 51 of 55 per cent of all families as nuclear.

Thus, while these hypotheses also stipulate the persistence of joint family structures in the society, the "cutting off" points specified by the hypotheses in the propagation of joint structures reduce the viability of individual joint families and allow for at least half of the total number of families in the society to be nuclear *at a point in time* and *as a passing phase*. An incidence of even 55 per cent nuclear families in the society will not, therefore, substantiate *ipso facto* a process of nuclearization of joint family structures.

Next, we may examine a few hypotheses which refer to a course of nuclearization of joint family structures by following the sequence of "cutting off" points in the propagation of joint families as denoted so far by hypotheses 1-10. We shall first consider the possibility of a partial and conditional course of nuclearization which also provides systematically for the persistence of joint family structures. The following two hypotheses, with a slight variation between them, should meet our demand:

Hypothesis 11: From the family set up by a "son" of a deceased brother as per hypothesis 8, the couple of each "son's son" separates out after becoming "parents" except the couple of the last of the "sons' sons" which, with its progeny, stays with the "parental couple". The process is repeated in successive generations.

Hypothesis 12: From the family set up by a "son" of a deceased brother as per hypothesis 10, each "son's son" separates out after his effective marriage except the last of the "son's sons" who, with his wife and the progeny which will appear in due course, stays with the "parental couple". The process is repeated in successive generations.

The configurations of family structures according to hypotheses 11 and 12 will be as follows:

(1) All "root couples" in the age-groups 55 and above will form 3-generation unilaterally joint families, and all a_{50} couples will form 2-generation unilaterally joint families.

(2) All a_{45} couples, plus all subsidiary couples s_{45} (Z_1) which will move out of the families headed by a_{70} couples, will form 2-generation

unilaterally joint families for hypothesis 11 but nuclear families of the parent-child variety for hypothesis 12. According to the schema of development of the patrilineal-patrivirilocal joint family structures in Indian society, the incidence-rate of s_{45} (Z1) couples will be the same as for the "parental root couples" a_{70} (Z1 + Z2).

(3) All a_{40} , a_{35} , a_{30} , and a_{25} couples, plus all Z1 type subsidiary couples of the same age-groups, will form nuclear families of the parent-child variety. The incidence-rates of the subsidiary couples will correspond to those of their "parental root couples", as for s_{45} (Z1).

(4) For the remaining "root couples" and the corresponding unmarried "sons" and "daughters", the arrangements for hypotheses 11 and 12 will be as for hypotheses 8 and 10, respectively, except the following addition in the case of hypothesis 12: all s_{20} (Z1) couples, with the incidence-rates for a_{45} (Z1 + Z2) and s_{45} (Z1) couples, will form nuclear structures of the conjugal variety.

On the above mentioned basis, the relative incidence of different 11 and 12 forms of family structure in Indian society according to hypotheses will be as given in Table 10.

TABLE 10

FORMS OF FAMILY STRUCTURE TO EMERGE IN INDIAN SOCIETY IN TERMS OF A HYPOTHESIS	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL INCIDENCE FOR HYPOTHESIS	
	11	12
(1)	(2)	(3)
1-generation collaterally joint	2	—
3-generation unilaterally joint	16	15
2- " " "	18	7
Nuclear : parent-child variety	56	60
" conjugal variety	3	13
" sibling variety	5	4
Non-familial (=1-member) unit	0	1
TOTAL :	100	100

"0" denotes less than 1 per cent incidence.

The table shows that the incidence of nuclear units in the society must be at least 64 per cent of the total families in order to deduce only

a partial and conditional nuclearization of the joint family structures, and this deduction which also denotes a systematic persistence of the joint family structures in the society will hold good although 77 per cent of all families are found to be nuclear.

VIII

Lastly, we may examine two hypotheses which depict the situation towards the nuclearization of all joint families and the termination of the process, respectively. The hypotheses may be formulated as follows:

Hypothesis 13: From the family set up by a "son" of a deceased brother as per hypothesis 8, the couple of each "sons' son" separates out after becoming "parents" and the process is repeated in successive generations without any couple of the "son's sons" staying with the corresponding "parental couple" after assuming themselves the parental role.

Hypothesis 14: From the family set up by a "son" of a deceased brother as per hypothesis 10, each "son's son" separates out after his effective marriage and the process is repeated in successive generations without any couple of the "son's sons" staying with the "parental couple".

According to hypothesis 13, all "root couples" in age-groups 55 and above will form nuclear families of the conjugal variety. All a_{50} and a_{45} couples, plus $s_{45}(Z1)$, will form 2-generation unilaterally joint families, as in the case of hypothesis 11. All "root couples" and "subsidiary couples" in the age-groups given by the value of j , varying from 25 to 40, will form nuclear families of the parent-child variety. And the arrangement for the remaining "root couples" and corresponding unmarried "sons" and "daughters" will be the same as for hypothesis 11.

According to hypothesis 14, all "root couples" in age-groups 50 and above, plus all "root couples" and "subsidiary couples" for the value of $j=20$, will form nuclear families of the conjugal variety. All "root couples" and "subsidiary couples" in the age-groups given by the value of j varying from 25 to 45, will form nuclear families of the parent-child variety. And the arrangement for the unmarried "sons" and "daughters", corresponding to the "root couples", will be the same as for hypothesis 12.

On the above mentioned basis, the relative incidence of different forms of family structure in Indian society according to hypotheses 13 and 14 will be as given in Table 11.

TABLE 11

FORMS OF FAMILY STRUCTURE TO EMERGE IN INDIAN SOCIETY IN TERMS OF A HYPOTHESIS	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL INCIDENCE FOR HYPOTHESIS	
	13	14
(1)	(2)	(3)
1-generation collaterally joint	1	—
2-generation unilaterally joint	15	—
Nuclear : parent-child variety	65	64
„ conjugal variety	16	32
„ sibling variety	3	3
Non-familial (= 1-member) unit	0	1
TOTAL:	100	100

“0” denotes less than 1 per cent incidence.

The table shows that a definite course towards the nuclearization of joint family structures will be indicated when more than 84 per cent of the families in India are found to be nuclear, and the course will reach its culmination when all families are of this kind. But, then, a large number of the nuclear families will be of the conjugal variety, inasmuch as one-third of the total when the course of nuclearization is fully consolidated.

In the light of their operating capacity in Indian society, the hypotheses 1-14 will satisfactorily constitute the frame of reference within which we want to evaluate the data available on the relative incidence of nuclear and joint family structures in India. We could formulate more hypotheses: some to specify more precisely the “cutting off” points in the propagation of patrilineal-patrivirilocal joint structures, some as alternatives to the “cutting off” points already specified. As to the first possibility, however, the hypotheses 2, 4, 6, 7, and 9 are not seen to produce any substantially different effect on Indian society from that envisaged by hypotheses 1, 3, 5, 8, and 10, respectively. As to the latter, alternatives to hypotheses 1-14 will not add significantly to our present stock of knowledge. This can be verified by formulating alternate hypotheses and estimating their operating capacity on the basis of the data utilized to estimate the operating capacity of hypotheses 1-14.

To be sure, the estimation of the operating capacity of hypotheses 1-14 could have been more efficiently designed or it could have been executed with greater precision if more data were available for the purpose. At the present state of our knowledge, however, the frame of reference we require will be adequately represented by the estimates we have obtained. Table 12 has, therefore, been prepared which summarizes the findings in Tables 5 and 7-11 according to four stages of operation of the "cutting off" points in the propagation of patrilineal-patrivirilocal joint family structures in Indian society.

TABLE 12

HYPOTHESIS UNDER EACH STAGE OF OPERATION OF "CUTTING OFF" POINTS IN THE PROPAGATION OF PATRILINEAL-PATRIVIRILOCAI JOINT FAMILY STRUCTURE		PERCENTAGE-INCIDENCE OF THE FORMS OF FAMILY STRUCTURE TO EMERGE IN INDIAN SOCIETY				
		Joint		Nuclear	Non-Familial Unit	Total
		Collateral	Unilateral			
(1)		(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
<i>Stage 1</i>						
Continuation of joint structures under ever-restricted scope of proliferation	Hypothesis 1	80	9	11	—	100
	Hypothesis 2	77	12	11	—	100
	Hypothesis 3	58	12	30	0	100
	Hypothesis 4	57	13	30	0	100
	Hypothesis 5	36	39	25	0	100
	Hypothesis 6	27	49	24	0	100
<i>Stage 2</i>						
Persistence of joint structures & formation of nuclear units in transit	Hypothesis 7	4	45	51	0	100
	Hypothesis 8	2	44	54	0	100
	Hypothesis 9	2	44	54	0	100
	Hypothesis 10	—	43	55	2	100
<i>Stage 3</i>						
Conditional and partial nuclearization of joint structures	Hypothesis 11	2	34	64	0	100
	Hypothesis 12	—	22	77	1	100
<i>Stage 4</i>						
Systematic and complete nuclearization of joint structures	Hypothesis 13	1	15	84	0	100
	Hypothesis 14	—	—	99	1	100
Average for all hypotheses		25	27	48	0	100

"0" denotes less than 1 per cent incidence.

IX

The data available on variations in family structures in India, as we have stated already, are sparse and sporadic. They cannot give us a precise estimate of their relative incidence in the society as a whole. We can, however, form a fairly comprehensive picture of the range of variation existing in Indian society in the relative incidence of nuclear and joint structures if we collate the information readily available. My colleague, Prafulla Chakrabarti, undertook the task, and has collated from published sources the data for 30 communities of people spread over 15 States (and Union Territories) of India and referring to a total sample of 44,657 family-units.

The definition of the family we adopted for this purpose is that of a co-resident and commensal kin-group since it conforms to the present discussion. On the same ground, the nuclear family is considered to be involved with the conjugal, parental-filial, and inter-sibling relations in any combination thereof, including their exclusive incidence. So that the nuclear family refers to a unit of parent(s) and/or child(ren), and is not involved with any form of lineal and/or affinal relation. It may be of the parent-child, conjugal, or sibling variety.

Some states, or certain sectors of a state, could not be represented in this collation because reliable data, or those referring strictly to the above definitions of family structures, are not available. For some other states, the data from small samples have not been taken into account since large-sample data are available. For Rajasthan, on the other hand, the data available from one source but in various publications had to be reproduced as a weighted estimate, the weights being the sample size of individual sets of data. In this way, Table 13 (page 79) has been prepared.

There is the possibility, however, that the percentage-incidence of nuclear families in the society, as shown in Table 13, will give us underestimates for the present discussion. The total number of families in respective samples refer to: (1) nuclear units as defined above, (2) patrilineal-patrivirilocal joint families we have described before, and (3) non-patrilineal and/or non-patrivirilocal extended families which, for reasons discussed elsewhere, may be labelled "family complex" (Mukherjee, 1962: 372-396). The percentage of nuclear to all families in a sample may, therefore, be substantially lower than the percentage of nuclear to the total of only those families which are either nuclear or patrilineally-patrivirilocally joint if the extended families in the

sample are not predominantly of the patrilineal-patrivirilocal variety and they include a large number of "family complex".

We lack extensive information on the relative incidence of different varieties of extended family in Indian society. However, all the sources mentioned in Table 13 point out that the overwhelming majority of extended families in the samples are exclusively of the patrilineal-patrivirilocal variety. Additionally, the large sample from West Bengal for 1960-61 gives us the following precise estimates: 72 per cent of all extended families are of the patrilineal-patrivirilocal variety, and 12, 14, and 2 per cent of the extended families incorporate non-patrilineal and/or non-patrivirilocal kinship relations on a patrilineal-patrivirilocal, nuclear, and 1-member base, respectively. The available information suggests, therefore, that the percentage-incidence of nuclear families in the society, as shown in Table 13, will not register any serious underestimation for the present discussion. Also, as it will be seen from the discussion which follows from Table 13, any underestimation (unless it is of a very large magnitude) will not affect the inferences which may be drawn from the information given in Tables 12 and 13. Table 13 will, thus, provide us with the information we require at the optimum possibility.

Table 13 shows that the percentage of nuclear families to total families ranges from 35 to 63 for the 30 communities of people for whom data could be readily collated. Even if they are somewhat underestimates with reference to the indicators in Table 12, they represent hypothetical situations from an intermediate phase between stage 1 and stage 2 hypotheses to hypothesis 11 under stage 3. These percentages, however, may also represent the concurrent operation of several or all the hypothetical situations specified in Table 12, as we can see from the average values given in the last row of Tables 12 and 13. In equal or unequal intensity, the respective hypotheses may operate with reference to different social groups constituting a community and thus produce an average value which appears to denote that the community subscribes to one particular hypothetical situation or, at the most, to two hypothetical situations. We should, therefore, examine the operating role of each of hypotheses 1-14 in contemporary India.

Ideally, we require extensive empirical data, comparable with the relative incidence of different forms of family structure according to hypotheses 1-14, in order to ascertain the operating role of these hypotheses in contemporary India. But these details are even more scarce than the dichotomous data on the relative incidence of nuclear and joint family structures in the society. Thus, we could obtain

TABLE 13

STATE	COMMUNITY	SAMPLE OF FAMILY- UNITS	PERCENT- AGE OF NUCLEAR FAMILIES TO TOTAL	DATE OF EN- QUIRY	SOURCE
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Andhra	People of 1 village	195	43	1950's	Dube, 1960 : 210
Assam	Rabhas in 2 villages	160	54	1955	Das, 1957 : 121-122
Bihar	Giridih town people	3,453	45	1958	SRU—unpub.
Delhi	Delhi cityfolk	14,644	61	1955-57	Rao <i>et al</i> , 1965 : 181
	Rampur villagers	148	45	1950's	Kolenda, 1968 : 355
Gujarat	Mahuva town people	413	47	1956-58	Desai, 1964 : 41
	Navsari town people	315	49	1951	Kapadia, 1959 : 76
	Surat district rural folk	847	37	1951	Kapadia, 1959 : 76
Kashmir	Pandits of 1 village	84	38	1957	Madan, 1965 : 66-69
Kerala	Nayars in 2 census-tracts	124	35	1955-60	Kolenda, 1968 : 362
Madhya- Pradesh	People of 1 city, 2 towns and 23 villages	2,314	52	1958	Driver, 1963 : 41
Madras	A Tanjore village Brah- mins	28	46	1950's	Kolenda, 1968 : 360
Maharashtra	Citizens of Poona	3,882	57	1937	Sovani <i>et al</i> , 1956 : 99
	Citizens of Poona	4,988	56	1954	Sovani <i>et al</i> , 1956 : 98
	Phalton town people	695	50	1961-62	Karve <i>et al</i> , 1965 : 29
	People of 23 villages	717	48	1961-62	Karve <i>et al</i> , 1965 : 29
Mysore	2 town & 16 village people	537	37	1951	Kulkarni, 1960 : 72- 79
	People of 39 villages	527	36	1951	Kulkarni, 1960 : 72- 79
Orissa	Brahmins in 1 village	155	43	1955	Ray, 1956 : 11
	Thetaris in 22 villages	151	60	1959	Chakrabarti— unpub.
	Hill Bhuiyas in 6 villages	111	58	1955	Biswas—unpub.
Rajasthan	People of 120 villages	2,946	51	1961-62	Bose <i>et al</i> *
Uttar Pra- desh	Factory workers of Kanpur	355	50	1953-54	Niehoff, 1959 : 77-78
	People of 4 villages	380	47	1950-60	Kolenda, 1968 : 355-363
	Tharus in 33 villages	806	52	1948-50	Srivastava, 1958 : 71-72
West Bengal	City sector of the State	1,134	52	1960	Mukherjee, 1965 : 26
	Town sector of the State	706	57	1960-61	Mukherjee, 1965 : 26
	Rural sector of the State	2,642	63	1960-61	Mukherjee, 1965 : 26
	Rural sector of the State	547	58	1956	Mukherjee, 1968 : 47
	Rural sector of the State	653	50	1950	Mukherjee, 1968 : 47
Average for 30 communities of people		44,657	55	1937-62	

*Reference for Bose *et al* — 1963 : 122; 1964(a) : 206; 1964(b) : 147; 1964(c) : 300 ; 1965(a) : 196; 1965(b) : 221.

relevant details for only 5 out of the 30 communities considered for Table 13. The 5 communities, however, are widely spaced and comprise, in all, a sample of 5,892 family-units. We should be able to draw some pertinent conclusions, therefore, on the basis of the information obtained from them, as shown in Table 14, and from the ancillary information available.

TABLE 14

FORM OF FAMILY STRUCTURE	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL FAMILIES IN EACH SAMPLE				
	West Bengal 1960-61	Mysore 1951	Orissa Samples		Kashmir Pandits 1957
			Thetaris 1959	Bhuiyas 1955	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Collaterally joint of:	13	20	9	14	30
4-generations	0	—	—	—	—
3-generations	3	—	—	3	12
2-generations	9	16*	7	9	18
1-generation	1	4	2	2	—
Unilaterally joint of:	28	43	31	28	32
4-generations	1	—	—	1	—
3-generations	22	19	21	15	21
2-generations	5	24	10	12	11
Nuclear	59	37	60	58	38
TOTAL:	100	100	100	100	100

"0" denotes less than 1 per cent incidence.

*A few families may be of 3-generation structures, which could not be ascertained exactly.

As compared to the figures in Tables 5, 7 and 12, the data in Table 14 indicate that the role of hypotheses 1-4 is virtually nil in Indian society. The forms of family structure which will emerge owing to the operation of these hypotheses must have the following characteristics: (1) they will be predominantly of the joint variety, (2) most of the joint families will be linked collaterally at their topmost generation-levels, and (3) a large number of these collateral joint families will be of 3-generation structures. The data for 5 communities in Table 14 are quite contrary to this arrangement. Also, the less comprehensive data for some other communities mentioned in Table 13 indicate the same situation. Thus, only 36 per cent of the joint families among the people of Phalton town and 23 villages in Maharashtra were found in 1961-62 to be collaterally joint, and these

families—labelled “laterally joint”—are essentially of 2- or 1-generation structures since the authors stated: “A lateral joint family is that in which a man, his married brothers, their wives, married sons and sons’ wives live. When a man lives . . . with his father’s brother, he can be said to be living in a laterally joint family” (Karve *et al*, 1965: 27).

There are also other evidences to suggest the negligible or no role of the hypotheses 1-4 in contemporary India. From the possible emergence of different forms of family structure according to each of the hypotheses 1-14, we can estimate the percentage-incidence of families in the society recording inter-cousin relationships of successive orders of maximum distance. The procedure will be the same as illustrated with reference to Diagram I, in order to ascertain the presence of inter-cousin relationship in a family as distant as between two “father’s father’s father’s father’s brother’s son’s son’s son’s son or daughter”. Table 15 has been prepared by following this procedure and the manner in which Tables 5 and 7-11 were prepared. It registers an extension of inter-cousin relationships for hypotheses 1 and 2 which is rarely mentioned even for earlier times although the past is usually idealized and exaggerated in the context of a wide network of kinship relations in a joint family.

TABLE 15

HYPOTHESIS	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL JOINT FAMILIES RECORDING MAXIMUM EXPAN- SION OF INTER-COUSIN RELATIONSHIP ACCORDING TO RESPECTIVE HYPOTHETICAL SITUATIONS					
	F ⁴ BZ ⁴	F ³ BZ ³	F ² BZ ²	FBZ	No inter- cousin relation	Total
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
1	4	20	54	17	5	100
2		16	51	27	6	100
3			26	55	19	100
4			24	57	19	100
5				78	22	100
6				65	35	100
7				50	50	100
8				47	53	100
9				47	53	100
10				49	51	100
11					100	100
12					100	100
13					100	100
14					100	100

F⁴BZ⁴ = Father’s father’s father’s father’s brother’s son’s son’s son’s son or daughter.

F³BZ³ = Father’s father’s father’s brother’s son’s son’s son or daughter.

F²BZ² = Father’s father’s brother’s son’s son or daughter.

FBZ = Father’s brother’s son or daughter.

The extent of inter-cousin relationships noted in Table 15 for hypotheses 3 and 4 may occur but, if it does, it does very seldom indeed. The presence of second degree cousins in a family (*viz.*, father's father's brother's son's son or daughter) is so rare a phenomenon that even among the Pandits in a Kashmir village, who register a 72 per cent incidence of joint family structures, Madan found "The presence of second cousins in a household is exceptional" (Madan, 1965: 69). From the extensive random sample survey of West Bengal family structures in 1960-61 (which has been mentioned in note 1 and in Tables 13 and 14 only 0.57 per cent of the extended families were found to contain second degree cousins and none beyond this kinship distance. Also, although not so pointedly as above (since precise details in this respect are hardly available), the same indication is there in several of the sources mentioned in Table 13. Thus, like hypotheses 1 and 2, hypotheses 3 and 4 also do not come within our purview with reference to variations in family structures in India today.

Hypotheses 5 and 6 may not be so unimportant as hypotheses 1-4. In the light of the rudimentary influence of the latter group of hypotheses in present times, the former two hypotheses bear the burden to interpret the occurrence of some 2-generation collaterally joint families as indicated by the data in Table 14. However, hypotheses 5 and 6 also are not singularly effective in contemporary India. Table 12 points out that they will lead to the emergence of 24 or 25 per cent nuclear families in the society, while Table 13 shows that only 5 out of the 30 communities register a percentage-incidence of nuclear structures between 35 and 39, 9 register it between 40 and 49, 13 between 50 and 59, and 3 as 60, 61 and 63. The operating role of hypotheses 5 and 6 in Indian society, therefore, can only be marginal.

Also, this marginal role is possibly losing its importance in the time sequence. It will be realized from the formulation of the hypotheses that, except with reference to hypotheses 1-4, for all other hypotheses a shift in the tendency of the people to form a different family organization will take at least a period of 25-30 years to complete the change-over according as the point of departure for the shift refers to a male undergoing effective marriage at 20-24 years or becoming a parent for the first time at 25-29 years. Thus, 30 years will be required, at the minimum, to totally supplant the societal tendency denoted by hypotheses 5 and 6 (*viz.*, to form one's own family after becoming grandparent to the first son's first child) and fully consolidate the tendency denoted by hypotheses 7 and 8 (*viz.*, to form a separate family after becoming parent). Correspondingly, 25 years will be required to supplant totally the former societal tendency and consolidate that denoted

by hypotheses 9 and 10 (*viz.*, to form a separate family after undergoing effective marriage). So that, in these 30 or 25 years, the percentage-incidence of nuclear families in the society will rise by 27 to 31 points from 24 or 25 for hypotheses 5 and 6 to 51-55 for hypotheses 7-10: an increment of about 1 point, on an average, per year. In the intervening years, accordingly, several communities may be found in the society to register 35 to 50 per cent incidence of nuclear families, as recorded in Table 13. And since 12 communities are seen to register 41 to 50 per cent incidence of nuclear structures as against only 5 recording 40 or a less percentage-incidence of the same, it appears justified to conclude that the operating role of hypotheses 5 and 6, although still effective in Indian society, is on the wane in the time perspective.

Thus, the possibility of any substantial operation of hypotheses 5 and 6 in contemporary India is also ruled out.

Hypotheses 7-10 are obviously operating in India: to the point of dominating the social scene. Otherwise, one cannot explain that 13 out of 30 communities considered for Table 13 register percentage-incidence of nuclear structures between 50 and 59 when: (1) hypotheses 1-4, which refer to very low rates of incidence of nuclear families in the society, cannot be taken into account, and (2) hypotheses 13-14, which refer to very high rates of incidence of nuclear families in the society, are similarly beyond our consideration (as we shall find subsequently). Incidentally, we also notice that correspondence between the indicators in Tables 9, 12, and 15 and the empirical data in Tables 13 and 14 is best achieved with reference to these four hypotheses.

The operating role of hypotheses 11 and 12 cannot be ignored in the present context, especially if we bear in mind that the empirical data in Table 13 may somewhat underestimate the situation to which the indicators in Table 12 refer. As against 51 to 55 per cent incidence of nuclear structures in the society according to hypotheses 7-10, the operation of hypothesis 11 will lead to the incidence of 64 per cent nuclear families. We find, correspondingly, that 8 out of 30 communities in Table 13 register 56 to 63 per cent incidence of nuclear structures.

The role of hypothesis 11, however, can only be incipient as yet. The maximum representation of nuclear families by a community is found to be 63 per cent, and only 2 other communities out of 30 are seen to record the incidence of nuclear families beyond 59 per cent. Moreover, an effective operation of hypothesis 11 will not only produce 34 per cent unilaterally joint families in the society (Table 12) but all these families will not be involved with any inter-cousin relationship

(Table 15). This condition is not generally met with in contemporary India. Therefore, by following our previous explanation of a change-over from hypothesis 5 to hypothesis 7 or 8 (or from hypothesis 6 to hypothesis 9 or 10), we find that in India, today, a number of communities are possibly *in transition* from the hypothetical situation envisaged by hypotheses 7-10 to that envisaged by hypothesis 11.

The role of hypothesis 12 may not be altogether absent from Indian society but it must be of even lower intensity than that of hypothesis 11. As we find from Table 12, hypothesis 12 will produce joint families at a much lower rate than the hypotheses 7-11 while the percentage-incidence of nuclear structures in the society will be as high as 77. Also, Table 15 shows that the joint families will not register any inter-cousin relationship. So that, even if hypothesis 12 is operating in India, today, its influence must be rudimentary.

As regards hypotheses 13 and 14, the situation is not speculative at all. They do not come within our consideration in the present context. In some small sectors of Indian society, such as among the two "primitive tribes" of Urali and Kanikkar in the reserved forests of Travancore, the percentage-incidence of nuclear families tend to correspond to the operation of hypothesis 13 (Nag, 1956: 219-223). We do not, however, notice the indication that the Indian society at large is approaching the stage specified in Table 12 by the operation of hypotheses 13 and 14. It will be seen from Table 11 that they not only record a preponderant or exclusive incidence of nuclear structures in the society but a very large number of these structures represent only those couples of which the "sons" have separated and formed nuclear families of their own. Thus, the two hypotheses stipulate that the old-age men and women will have to fend for themselves: a characteristic of family organization with which we are not unfamiliar in many European and American societies but which has yet to develop as a societal tendency in India. Also, Table 13 shows that none of the 30 communities of people registers a percentage-incidence of nuclear structures beyond 63, and only 2 of them beyond 60. While, as corresponding to such an incidence of nuclear families in the society, the operation of hypothesis 13 requires an incidence of 84 per cent nuclear families and hypothesis 14 requires a full 100 per cent incidence. To date, therefore, the role of these two hypotheses in Indian society is virtually nil.

X

It follows from the above mentioned findings that variations in family structures in contemporary India should be interpreted by: (1) the

dominating role of hypotheses 7-10, (2) the lingering influence of the hypotheses 5 and 6, and (3) the incipient but possibly growing influence of hypothesis 11 and perhaps also of hypothesis 12 to some extent. This spectrum can also explain a slow but steady rise in the percentage-incidence of nuclear structures in some sectors of the society in the longitudinal perspective while that course of change may not be taking place yet, or may not be noticed, in some other sectors. It may not be noticed because a minimum span of 25 or 30 years is required to register a change by a few points in the percentage-incidence of nuclear structures owing to a shift in hypothetical situations.

Longitudinal data on variations in family structures in India are far more scarce than the cross-sectional data. From the information collated in Table 13, we can illustrate only two situations: (1) the rural sector of West Bengal shows a steady increase in the percentage-incidence of nuclear families from 50 in 1950 to 58 in 1956, and 63 in 1960-61, and (2) contrariwise, the citizens of Poona register 57 per cent occurrence of nuclear families among them in 1937 and 56 per cent in 1954. These two contradictory situations can be explained by: (1) a course of change in rural sector of West Bengal from the last phase of the fifth or sixth hypothetical situation to any one of the seventh, eighth, ninth or the tenth, and thence to the eleventh or even the twelfth, and (2) either no change in the Poona community during 1937-54 or a change-over from any one of the seventh, eighth, ninth or tenth hypothetical situation to the eleventh or even the twelfth.

As explained earlier, a change-over from the fifth or the sixth to any one of the seventh, eighth, ninth or the tenth hypothetical situation will involve a maximum rise by 1 point, on an average, in the percentage-incidence of nuclear families per year. Correspondingly, a change-over from one of the seventh, eighth, ninth or tenth hypothetical situation to the eleventh will involve a rise in the percentage-incidence of nuclear families by only 9 to 13 points over the minimum period of 25 or 30 years. So that a sample survey, even when replicated after 17 years, may not be able to detect the very slow pace of change.

To be sure, we are not in a position to assert that the rise in the percentage-incidence of nuclear structures in the rural sector of West Bengal and the *status quo* in that respect among the citizens of Poona have been effected exactly in the manner described above. Our discussion refers to certain possibilities only which support the contention that a slow rise, or no rise, in the percentage-incidence of nuclear families within even two decades does not affect adversely the conclusion we have been able to draw on the effective role of hypotheses 7-10 in

contemporary India with a hangover from the role of hypotheses 5 and 6, at one end, and the possible emerging role of hypothesis 11, and perhaps also of hypothesis 12, at the other. It is necessary to establish this point since only on the basis of a conclusion drawn unequivocally that we may properly utilize the data available on the relative incidence of nuclear and joint family structures in Indian society.

Thus, we could deduce and infer directly from an exclusive or effective operation of the stage 1 hypotheses (shown in Table 12) that nuclearization of joint family structures is not taking place in India although an appreciable number of nuclear families are found in the society. At the other extreme, we could deduce and infer directly from the operation of the stage 4 hypotheses that nuclearization of joint families is taking place, or has taken place, in India. Since, however, neither of the two groups of hypotheses is generally operative in the Indian context, the process of nuclearization of joint family structures cannot be a *matter of deduction* from the mere presence of nuclear units in the society in apparently large numbers or from any slow increase in the percentage-incidence of nuclear families in the longitudinal perspective. The process has to be a *matter of inductive inference* which cannot be drawn *ipso facto* from the quantitative data on the relative incidence of nuclear and joint families in the cross-sectional or the longitudinal perspective of the society.

Pursuant to the above findings, we can draw an important inference, inductively, by examining three aspects of the joint family organization which are differentially emphasized, or ignored, by the operating role of hypotheses 1-14 in the society. These aspects are: (1) the strain representing the family of procreation of a "root couple", (2) the collateral strain(s) in the family with reference to that "root couple", and (3) the collateral strain(s) in the family with reference to couple(s) subsidiary to the "root couple".

The first is seen to be the crucial aspect of current family organization in India. It is the central theme of hypotheses 5-10, and, although circumscribed, persists under hypotheses 11 and 12. The "family" comprising the children and grand-children of a couple remains unimpaired throughout the shifting hypothetical situations 5-10 or, for that matter, 1-10. It is impaired by the hypothetical situations 11 and 12 but the couple still lives with one of the children and the progeny of that child. Only hypotheses 13 and 14 can alter the arrangement but they are not in the picture.

The second aspect denotes the essential characteristic of hypotheses 1-4 which are not operative in India today. Although circumscribed,

it persists under hypotheses 5 and 6, but the operating role of these two hypotheses also is on the wane. Thus, familial integration of a set of "root couples" of brothers is not in the picture for Indian society when it involves the presence of granduncle/grandaunt, uncle/aunt one degree apart, and second degree inter-cousin relationships in a family.

The third aspect, which is implicit to the hypothetical situations 1-10, draws our attention in respect of the incipient but possible growing influence of hypothesis 11, and perhaps also of hypothesis 12, in contemporary India. We should, therefore, take note of the fact that, as different from hypotheses 1-10, hypothesis 11 forbids the presence of uncle/aunt and inter-cousin relationships in a family and hypothesis 12 forbids further the presence of sibling-in-law relationship in it.

Family in India is, thus, seen to shake off successively the collateral relations it contained. The process involves the removal of those collateral relationships which, at a stage, records the maximum kinship distance between two family members. In the immediate past, the families have been shorn off the granduncle/grandaunt, uncle/aunt one degree apart, and second degree inter-cousin relationships. This course of change is possibly reaching its culmination in present times, and there is the indication that in the near future many families may also be shorn off the uncle/aunt and first degree inter-cousin relationships. The removal of sibling-in-law relationship from the families also is not improbable in the future.

Contrariwise, the parent-child and grandparent-grandchild relationships are sustained throughout the above mentioned course of change in family organization. As mentioned earlier, this is the key note of hypotheses 5-10 and even if hypotheses 11 and 12 dominate the social scene in the next 2-3 decades (which is the minimum requirement to consolidate a shift from one hypothetical situation to another), the above arrangement will not undergo a qualitative transformation. Each couple will live, eventually, with at least one of its sons and that son's wife and progeny, while each of the other sons, who will break away from the family and later return to the joint family organization, will contribute to a rise in the incidence of nuclear families in the society because of this intervening phase in the life cycle of his family of procreation. The successive increase in the incidence of nuclear families in the society will, thus, be effected in the same manner as effected by the hypotheses 7-10 currently.

We may infer, therefore, from the information currently available that the central tendency in Indian society is to pursue the joint family

organization while shearing off the collateral ramifications of the joint structures. We may also infer that while there is no evidence that this central tendency is going to be replaced by another in the near future, what may happen by the end of this century is that more than three-fourth of all families in India will be nuclear and the joint families, comprising less than one-fourth of all families, will not register any collateral relationship in them. ✓

XI

If the inference drawn above is supported by further empirical investigations, it will pose new problems for research while proving some of the issues raised at the beginning of this monograph to be redundant in the context of the emerging pattern of family in India. We shall not be permitted to deduce directly from the relative incidence of nuclear and joint family structures that the Indian society is passing through a course of nuclearization. We shall also not be able to deduce from the available evidence of privilege and obligation, or of psychological solidarity, between the break-away nuclear units and the corresponding parental and/or sibling families that the joint family organization is functioning under present circumstances in an extra-territorial context.

The "sons" and "brothers" who have broken away from a joint family and register the above mentioned characteristics of behavioural or psychological bond in the intervening phase of their nuclear family organization may also do the same when they themselves are living in respective joint families of procreation. The bond may be less strong in the latter than in the earlier phase of their current family organization because they will be involved by this time with new series of privileges and obligations and new strains of psychological integration, as referring to their daughters-in-law, grandchildren, etc. Shall we be justified, however, to label the bond of privilege and obligation in the earlier phase as "familial bond" and the same in the later phase as "kinship bond"? Shall we be justified to label their mental orientation in the earlier phase as denoting "familial integration" and the same in the later phase as denoting "kinship integration"?

The justification would have been there if we could infer a distinct course of nuclearization of joint family structures in the society in the manner outlined, illustratively, in Section II. The course is to run through three phases: one succeeding the other. In the first phase, we were to find that as locally functioning units (that is, identified by the attributes of co-residence and commensality) the joint families are replaced by those nuclear units *which do not revert back to joint family*

structures. So that, any evidence of "joint family"-wise action and attitude, which would denote the second and the third phase of the course of nuclearization, can be examined with reference to each of these previously functioning joint structure and its components which have been nuclearized to the extent denoted by the first phase. Such a situation, however, has not yet emerged in Indian society.

For the present, the behavioural and psychological characteristics we examine will have to refer, eventually, to two joint family structures at the same time: one representing the partly or fully disintegrated joint family of orientation of the "husbands" of the couple concerned, and the other representing the joint family of procreation of that couple. In the circumstances, these characteristics will only express the kinship ties of the people while in transition from one family structure to another which have the same content but are of different consistency. Their absence, on the other hand, cannot imply that the nuclear unit concerned will remain nuclear. The imputed "familial integration" and "familial orientation" of the people are, thus, of no relevance to us in the current familial context.

It follows that while in some other context a different form of identification of the family (as illustrated in Section II) may be found useful, the emerging pattern of family in India should be examined in terms of its identification as forming co-resident and commensal kingroups. So that, instead of collecting evidence of "familial integration" or "familial orientation" of the people living under nuclear or joint family structures, we should ask the following questions: Why is it that the central tendency of Indian society remains to pursue the joint family organization as a locally functioning unit while the collateral ramifications are successively removed from the family structures? Is there any possibility of replacement of this central tendency? Obviously, unequivocal answers to these two questions will reveal *the* perspective of family in India, of which the base is laid by the emerging pattern of family structures described in Section X.

The questions posed above will remain unanswered if we only harp on the tenacity of a traditional society whereby changes take place *within* the joint family organization and not beyond it, as we notice in respect of caste and virtually all other characteristics of Indian social organization (Goode, 1963: 2; Mukherjee, 1957: 1-124; 1965: 44-47; 1968: 39-41). There are indications, however, that attempts can be fruitfully made to answer the two questions. For we have seen that within the joint family organization also the changes taking place over a long period of time have a definite direction

and a recognizable pace: a point which has also been noted by Goode while describing various aspects of the family in India (Goode, 1963: 203-269).

The question, however, may be wrongly answered if we anticipate that in the presumed spectrum of social change from "tradition to modernity" the joint family organization cannot but be replaced eventually by the nuclear family organization. As we shall point out subsequently, even analytical studies on the family in India are frequently based on this spectrum. But a causal or concomitant relation between what is conceived as "traditional" and the joint family, and what is conceived as "modern" and the nuclear family, is not an invariable finding in the cross-sectional or longitudinal perspectives of world societies. Laslett, who is engaged in "the numerical study of society, over time", wrote:

"A study of the peasantry still surviving in the Eastern Netherlands in the early 1950's showed that no less than twenty-five per cent of all farms were being worked by married couples living with their in-laws. In reporting this fact to the Third World Congress of Sociology, the scholars concerned enlarged on the traditional character of this arrangement and contrasted it with the structure of the household in the modernized, urban areas of the Netherlands. But it is quite impossible to confirm that the English peasantry at least ever lived in multi-generational households to anything like this extent. The highest proportion of multi-generational households ever found in a pre-industrial English community is ten per cent, and married siblings living in the same household in order to work the same inherited peasant-holding, (also a widespread assumption about traditional rural society) are completely absent [Laslett, 1965(a): 92]. Whatever social evolution has taken place in the Eastern Netherlands it has not been of the character which is assumed by this hypothesis. The null point has been entirely misunderstood, through lack of an historical dimension." (Laslett 1967: 7-8.)

"Weber's famous theory relating the Reformation with the emergence of capitalism has been the subject of continuous discussion in the forty-five years since it was published, and the evidence brought forward to strengthen or to discredit it is enormous indeed. No doubt the facts will go on accumulating for as long as the hypothesis is felt to be illuminating. But it will never be proved or disproved, for it is not of a character which makes final proof or disproof a possibility. Now there

are claims of a theoretical sort in the social sciences which involve historical study, as Weber's does, and which can be demonstrated or denied. We may take as an example the proposition that industrial and urban society is characterized by a particular micro-structural feature: the independent, nuclear family of man, wife and children living alone. This is not a theorem of the same logical status as that of Weber's; it has not the same heuristic value and is rather a vague assumption on which a considerable amount of generalization depends than a deliberate theoretical venture. Nevertheless, it has implications for social policy as well as for social science, and it is essential to much speculation about alienation in the contemporary world.

"This proposition is undoubtedly falsifiable, given the required evidence about the pre-industrial family. What is more, it is certainly false in the form in which it seems to be believed by social scientists. . . . The evidence seems to suggest in fact that the size of the household has tended to grow rather than to shrink with the coming of industrialization, though its size has fluctuated since. The multi-generational family of kin living under the same roof or in close geographical proximity may even be somewhat commoner in the contemporary industrial city than it was amongst the peasantry. Urbanization, mechanical communications, the growth of wealth and the increase in the expectation of life may actually have strengthened the familial tie in some ways and widened the network of kinship." [Laslett, 1965(b): 588-589.]

Also, Goode, who believes that the "traditional family systems" are changing "toward fewer kinship ties with distant relatives and a greater emphasis on the 'nuclear' family unit of couple and children", wrote subsequently (Goode, 1963: 1-2):

"(1) Even if the family systems in diverse areas of the world are moving *toward* similar patterns, they *begin* from very different points, so that the trend in one family trait may differ from one society to another. . . .

(2) The elements within a family system may each be altering at different rates of speed. . . .

(3) Just *how* industrialization or urbanization affects the family system, or how the family system facilitates or hinders these processes is not clear.

(4) It is doubtful that the amount of change in family patterns is a simple function of industrialization; more likely, ideological

and value changes, partially independent of industrialization, also have some effect on family action."

"Tradition to modernity", therefore, will not be an unambiguous or a comprehensive conceptual medium to answer the two questions posed earlier and to develop, on that basis, *the perspective of family in India.*

The role of "values" has been raised in this context, but they must have appropriate bases to emerge, survive, and be replaced. Abstract and esoteric value consideration, which we do not infrequently notice to have been employed to explain the perspective of family in India, will not lead us very far. They may also distort or underexpose reality. For example, constant filial piety to support the old-age "parental couple" but ever-diminishing fraternal and/or avuncular solidarity need not be an innate characteristic of the Indian people. It will obviously be ludicrous to distinguish the Indian people on this basis from those who *apparently* register both the characteristics in the positive by maintaining the collateral joint family structure or those who *apparently* register neither of the two qualities by living under nuclear family organization. Also a facile course of value judgement will be upset by the fact that those who behave as non-conformists at their young age and break away from joint family organization conform to the same structural arrangement in the society when they become parents, parents-in-law, and grandparents.

One may be inclined, in the circumstances, to steer oneself clear from both the consideration of the "null point" raised by Laslett and any "value consideration" at all. For it appears that purely on the basis of the directly ascertained empirical data the situation can be interpreted to show that the people wish to form a joint family organization *but* it must be his and/or her family of procreation. This interpretation, however, will give rise to two questions: (1) Why should the people strive to have the privilege of a joint family of procreation and shake off the obligation of a joint family of orientation or of a joint family of orientation and procreation? (2) How can joint family organization survive in the society if this be a consistent attitude of the people? For, in case the formation of one's own family of procreation is the overruling urge of the people, all families in the society will be nuclear irrespective of the desire of the parents and grandparents to live in their *joint* families of procreation.

Thus, as following from the inference drawn on the emerging pattern of family structures, the course of research necessary to provide us with unequivocal answers to the questions "what", "how", and "why" regarding the family in India cannot depend on any "hit and

run" sort of sociological analysis or on any speculative and conjectural form of psychological analysis. It calls for intensive inquiries into time-specific and space-specific material and value considerations in Indian society, but these inquiries also cannot be based on a pre-conceived model. To be sure, models will be necessary for the purpose, as it has been to draw an appropriate inference on the emerging pattern of family structures in India. A model, however, is like a scaffolding necessary to build a house. Its content, shape and size must vary according to requirement. Therefore, instead of depending upon any particular model, we should specify what the above-mentioned time-specific and space-specific intensive inquiries should be comprised of. In other words, we should outline the programme of research necessary to fulfil our objective.

The programme may be outlined as follows:

(1) Examination of changes in family structures in India in the historical and contemporary dimensions on the basis of what Laslett has stated as the "null point".

(2) Formulation of working hypotheses, in the light of our ever-accumulating stock of knowledge on the past and present course of change in family structures, regarding *how* and *why* such changes have taken place.

(3) Sustained empirical investigations to test the hypotheses formulated successively.

If we can undertake the comprehensive course of research which the above mentioned programme stands for, we should be able to ascertain, precisely and unequivocally, *the* perspective of family in India.

XII

We have virtually a virgin field to explore if we accept the research programme specified above. Our comprehension of the family in India in the historical dimension is extremely hazy since we have hardly ever attempted to develop it analytically and objectively. More often than not, we construct an idyllic image of a collateral joint family of brothers, with or without the "parental couple" at the top of the family pyramid, who lived a happy and peaceful family life in terms of their hierarchical rights from the senior to the junior and of their duties in the opposite hierarchical order. Families specified by the "root couples" of cousins do not usually enter into the picture, and the image of the 3-generation collateral joint family of brothers (or of the 4-generation joint family of procreation) is illustrated by stories and anecdotes from the epics

of Ramayana and Mahabharata, from various mythological, historical and other forms of literature.¹⁴ No doubt, variations in family structure must have existed in those days, as is also indicated in the literatures of the past. But does the image of the joint family organization we have in mind coincide with the frequently found family organization in ancient, mediaeval, and the early part of modern India? If it does not, in which respects does the image diverge from reality? Is this divergence of any serious import to our appreciation of family in India in the historical and contemporary dimensions?

We must also examine the set of values which sustains the image of joint family in India. It is supposed to be the stabilizing instrument in Indian family life even today. But what is exactly the set of values which is regarded to have fostered the development of joint family organization in Indian society and stabilized the organization over time? What was the social need to develop this set of values at one stage of India's history? How was it handed down from generation to generation besides through personal communication (*lokaparamparā*) within and beyond the family? Also, what is the degree and extent of survival of this set of values when it has not been able to sustain the collateral joint family of brothers in present-day India and may not be able to sustain in future the collateral ramifications within the joint family of procreation of a "root couple"?

Concurrently, we have to take note of the fact that in contemporary India, where the unit of production and service is predominantly an individual, the differential earnings of brothers may generate tension in a family in reference to consumption which in a joint family is to be collective. The tension may be reciprocated by the brothers or, more appropriately, by their wives in reference to their respective

¹⁴ It is of incidental importance to note that this is also the recommended sphere of devolution of family property according to the Hindu law-givers like Kautilya and Manu. Kautilya stipulated (Shamasastri, 1951:181-182):

"Sons whose fathers and mothers or ancestors are alive cannot be independent (*anisvarah*). After their time, division of ancestral property among descendants from the same ancestor shall take place, calculating per stirpes (according to fathers).

"Self-acquired property of any of the sons, with the exception of that kind of property which is earned by means of parental property is not divisible. Sons or grandsons till the fourth generation from the first parent shall also have prescribed shares (*amsabhajah*) in the property which is acquired by means of their undivided ancestral property; for the line (*pinda*) as far as the fourth generation is uninterrupted (*avichchhinna*)."

Manu wrote (Bühler, 1886: 366-367):

"Always to that (relative within three degrees) who is nearest to the (deceased *Sapinda* the estate shall belong; afterwards a *Sakulya* shall be (the heir, then) the spiritual teacher or the pupil."

families of procreation. Up to a point, the values they have inculcated may hold the constituents of the family together in spite of the tension generated. In some cases, the tension may subside due to mutual adjustment and compromise with reference to a more important issue like the lack of economic viability of the brothers to form separate families. But in general, and in the long run, the brothers are likely to separate, firstly, if their respective families of procreation consist of children, daughters-in-law, and grandchildren; secondly, if they comprise children only; and, thirdly, if they refer to conjugal units only.

Contrariwise, if in a joint family of procreation the "root couple" holds the economic power (e.g., as its breadwinner, owner of the property or the business establishment which provides for the family, etc.), the tension between collaterals may not arise or remain dormant, just as it will be regarding any tension between the daughters-in-law and the mother-in-law. The joint family may, then, survive. If, on the other hand, the "root couple" does not hold the economic power and the "sons" have substantially different economic positions in the society, they are likely to behave in the same manner as if the "parental couple" was not there. The presence of the "parental couple" may function as a value-charged temporary brake to the eventual separation of the brothers' families. The brake may not also function; and, in that case, one of the "sons" is likely to look after the "parental couple". This may or may not be dictated by filial devotion of a particular son. It may also be the outcome of an expected patrimony or the unavoidable necessity to shoulder the "burden" by one of the sons since the society does not provide for any other means to the old-age men and women to survive in the absence of their own socio-economic viability and a state-organized system of social security to depend upon.

Is this how the inferred course of change in family structures has taken place in India? Was the collateral joint family of brothers (who were also fathers and grandfathers, subject to their fertility and longevity), or the joint family of procreation of a grandfather or great-grandfather, the predominant characteristic of Indian society when the unit of production and service was a "family" in a subsistence economy and its concomitant clientele (*jajmani*) system? Was there a material incentive to form joint families in order to augment the size of labour-unit since it constituted the major share of the capital required for production of goods and services in the society and, without a growing home or external market in labour, the people had to depend on family labour? Is this incentive disappearing with the change in the relations of production in the society and with the emergence of a cash nexus which has enmeshed both the urban and rural sectors of India

today? Will the ever-widening economic differentiation in the society lead to the situation envisaged in Section X for the future? Or, will the savings and extended earning opportunities of the people, or a properly functioning system of social security, lead to a complete nuclearization of all joint family structures with the old-age men and women fending for themselves or being looked after by the state?

These constitute one set of questions which require answering. From empirical verification they may be found appropriate, partially relevant, or totally redundant. Anyhow, there is another set of questions to answer: Is there any evidence of a qualitative change in the value system of the people which will lead to a complete nuclearization of their joint family structures? What is exactly the other system of values which is confronting the Indian society today? Why is the previous set of values losing its influence in contemporary India? Is the course of change in values already expressed in the opinion of some of the people? Has it crystallized into a definite attitude of these or of a section of these people? Has that attitude been translated into action and evidenced by a shift in the behaviour pattern of these people vis-a-vis their family life? Finally, what are the potentialities and possibilities of a spread of these values in the society in commensuration with the family-life the people are leading and are likely to lead in the future, their formal and informal courses of education and learning at present and in the future, etc.?

The last set comprises the following of questions: What was the base for the emergence of the system of values which nurtured and stabilized the joint family organization in Indian society? What were the bases for the emergence of the contemporary material and non-material factors of change in the society in reference to the family life of the people? To what extent are these bases synchronized at present and are likely to be so in the future? What is, and what is expected to be, the degree of cross-fertilization of the material and non-material factors of change in the family-life of the people so that the course of change will have a staying power and can reach its culmination?

These questions cannot be answered properly by casual references to the Indian social system in the past and by undertaking superficial analyses of the contemporary situation in the light of the variable para-familial characteristics of the people and our common assumptions regarding the values and behaviour patterns denoted by these characteristics. As we shall discuss later, there are too many pit-falls in this short-cut route to success. Besides, many more questions will be found relevant to our appreciation of the family in India, if we seriously

pursue the proposed programme of research after making an initial break-through with the above-mentioned questions. The course of research, therefore, should be so designed that it can make the best use of our stock of knowledge at any stage of research without putting any constraint upon the continual flow of knowledge in the process. This, however, is not how we generally pursue researches in the family in India in order to develop *the* perspective.

Usually we try to develop the perspective of family in India according to the conceptual scale of "tradition to modernity" and by proceeding in one of the following two ways or by combining the two: (1) Opinion survey of students, youth, the general public, or of the members belonging to different forms of family structure, regarding their present and preferred family organization; and (2) Socio-economic survey of groups of people identified in terms of their relative adherence to different forms of family structure and various forms of social stratification. There are, of course, several opinion and/or socio-economic, and ethnographic, surveys which can provide us with valuable information to develop the perspective of family in India. Some of them could be used to prepare Table 13; others need not be mentioned here in order to avoid invidious distinction. These studies, however, do not have the professed aim to develop *the* perspective of family in India. We may, therefore, examine the two above mentioned procedures in reference to those studies only which have explicitly that object in view.

Thus, we find that it is surely useful to note the opinion of the people in regard to their family life but it is fallacious to equate opinion with the exposition of their attitude, especially if the course of research is not designed for this purpose. Moreover, it is fallacious and inconclusive to anticipate that the opinion or the attitude of the people will invariably be translated into action and effect a shift in their behaviour pattern. Indeed, in India today, because of too many cross-currents in the society, what one thinks, says, and does are virtually discrete entities. So that *ad hoc* opinion studies may even reach a conclusion that the U.S.A. college students are more "traditional" than their Indian counterparts (Theodorson, 1960: 17-28; Hallen and Theodorson, 1961: 51-59; 1963: 105-110; 1964; 1965: 208-211).

The second procedure provides us with valuable information regarding intra-society structural and functional variations, but the conclusions drawn therefrom are not infrequently found to be fallacious. For example, from one of the best known application of this

procedure, Morrison drew the conclusion (Morrison, 1959: 67):

“Types of familism in Badlapur are quite clearly related to various well defined cultural types. The data presented lead to the conclusion that the Joint and Quasi-Joint Family patterns are ‘traditional middle class’ village phenomena, patterns of living which are closely associated with certain multi-caste groups, certain traditional occupations, and certain educational levels. In addition, the Nuclear Family is very closely associated with both the upper and lower socio-economic and cultural groupings of the village. The Nuclear Family appears both among the better educated, more non-traditional, middle and upper status caste groupings, as well as among the lower socio-economic levels of poorer villagers. The former group reflects in its familism the influence of ‘urban-industrial’ non-traditional values and attitudes of modern life, whereas the latter group reflects a poverty-stricken way of life which in most cases does not permit larger family groups than the nuclear.”

At the risk of repeating ourselves, we may examine the fallacies and the inconclusive character of such a study in order that we may better design our future course of investigation. The first fallacy lies in the failure to take note of the fact that the incidence of nuclear families within any social group (or in the society *en bloc*) may not imply that the joint family structures are replaced by nuclear families unless the ratio of nuclear to all families is overwhelmingly large. Seldom the deductively identified “social groups” are found to conform to this requirement, while some inter-group differences in the relative incidence of nuclear families may be due to: (1) those variable “cutting off” points in the propagation of joint family structures which do not imply any course of nuclearization, and/or (2) intra-societal variation in the demographic profile and reproductive characteristics of the people.

It will be realized from the discussion in Sections IV-VIII that a social group which conforms with some other social groups to the same hypothesis regarding the “cutting off” points will have a lower possibility to form joint families if it registers any one or all of the following characteristics: (1) a shorter expectation of life, (2) a higher age of effective marriage, and (3) a lower fertility rate. There are evidences to indicate that the upper and the lower strata of Indian society register, for entirely different reasons, a higher age of effective marriage and a lower fertility rate than the middle stratum, while the expectation of life generally rises along the socio-economic ladder from the lowest to the highest. Anyhow, it should be obvious from the above mentioned

that, by itself, inter-group variations in the relative incidence of nuclear families will not imply a course of replacement of joint families by nuclear units.

The second fallacy lies in the fact that this analytical-deductive approach would have had some measure of success if the groups of people identified by a set of societal attributes denoted *invariably* a very large incidence of nuclear or joint family structures, respectively. We are not in a position to make any such assertion at the present state of our knowledge on the family and social stratification in India. On the contrary, we find that Morrison's conclusion, based on the study of a village in Maharashtra, is not borne out by the study of family structures in West Bengal, and the same is suggested from the studies of Kapadia and Desai in the far off State of Gujarat (Mukherjee, 1965: 24-31, 36-37, 68, 70-71, 76-80; Kapadia, 1956: 111-126; Desai, 1964: 74-124). The deductive approach, therefore, cannot assure us of a precise and eventually a comprehensive identification of mutually distinct but analogous social groups in the familial context, at any rate.

The third fallacy lies in the fact that the deductive approach also fails to explain why a particularly characterized social group behaves differently in the time and/or the space perspective. We cannot assume *ipso facto* that there is a sequential role of the post-colonial social and economic development of India which is reflected by the respective social groups identified by the analytical-deductive approach. On an empirical base also, we cannot assume specified social correlates of change in the agrarian and industrial economy, in rural and urban habitations, in colonial and post-colonial India, etc. And, following therefrom, we cannot presume the formation of different constellations of values and behaviour patterns around different social groups. These attempts are often found to be fallacious when undertaking a critical examination of the diachronic and synchronic aspects of social change (Mukherjee, 1968: 31-53).

The analytical but deductive approach, thus, cannot explain intra-society variations in the manner necessary to ascertain the emerging pattern of family structures in India. It cannot also explain the "how" and "why" of intra-society variations in the familial context. Instead, it may confuse the issue under reference since the societal alignments in contemporary India are in a state of flux and hardly any consistent trend of social change is visibly registered yet. Diametrically opposite views are, therefore, expressed on various aspects of social change, and qualitative or quantitative data are put forward in support

of the contending viewpoints (Mukherjee, 1965: 3-105). Possibly, because of this paradoxical situation, which is neatly expressed by the Indian proverb of seven blind men and the elephant, the analytical approach to social research in India has gained ground over the descriptive approach although the latter one also was employing quantitative data for a while (SRU, 1967). The deductive orientation of the analytical approach is, however, proving to be inadequate in the given situation, so that an inductive orientation to this approach is called for.

The approach will have to be analytical and inferential if we wish to pursue a fruitful course of research on any issue, and certain considerations may be found basic to the task we have outlined at the beginning of this monograph, *viz.*, (a) to find an unequivocal answer to the question of nuclearization of joint family structures in India, (b) to ascertain precisely, in the light of the answer obtained from the first phase of the task, the emerging pattern of family structures in India, and (c) to develop, on the basis of the findings from the second phase of the task, an unambiguous and comprehensive picture of *the* perspective of family in India. These considerations are stated below in their sequence:

(1) From the total space of different forms of family structure in Indian society, groups will have to be identified to denote the preservation or disintegration of the joint family structures without any restriction imposed on the course of identification and any fallacy involved in the process. The appropriate definition of these groups will be the formation of local functioning units of kinmembers, *viz.*, co-resident and commensal kingroups.

(2) Each family, defined as above, will subscribe to one of an appropriate set of hypotheses which specify the "cutting off" points in the propagation of joint family structures. So that the relative incidence of different forms of family structure in the society will express the variable number of family-units subscribing to one or another of these hypotheses.

(3) A properly designed empirical investigation will be able to ascertain, therefore, whether one or a combination of the following possibilities are effective in contemporary India:

- (a) Those intra-societal groups of families cannot be identified: (i) which reflect, respectively, the role of different hypotheses (or stages of hypotheses) mentioned under 2; (ii) which are not mere statistical categories, like income groups; and

- (iii) which can be physically identified, like, the groups described by Morrison in respect of the inhabitants of Badlapur village in Maharashtra.
- (b) While social groups, which are meaningful in the manner specified under (a), can be identified, they do not pursue over time the hypotheses they reflect, respectively, at the time of their identification.
- (c) The meaningfully identified social groups, which are consistent over time in regard to the hypotheses they reflect, respectively, are characterized exclusively by the ascriptive attributes of social organization, like, ethnic distinction, religion, caste, etc.; and those social groups which maintain the joint family organization are seen to be losing in numerical strength over time and those which represent the nuclear family organization are seen to be gaining in numerical strength correspondingly.
- (d) The same process as outlined for possibility (c) operates in the society but the social groups refer also, or only, to the non-ascriptive characteristics, like, occupation, education, property-ownership, migration, etc.
- (4) In case 3(a) is found to be the only effective possibility, the course of research will have to pursue further the primary task of identification of relevant social groups. It is to be borne in mind of either relevant social groups will be identified or the course of research will lose its relevance, for all variations will be at random and, thus, beyond our comprehension. This, however, depicts an improbable situation in the present context because as Homans put it succinctly: "It is hard to believe that social scientists could have worked out many generalizations about the behaviour of men in groups, if there had been no persistencies in this behaviour" (Homans, 1950: 311).
- (5) If 3(b) is found to be effective for *all* the social groups, variations in the relative incidence of nuclear and joint family structures will denote casual fluctuations around a central tendency and any interpretation of these variations to substantiate change in family structure will be fallacious. However, inquiries into the "how" and "why" of this tendency will reveal the perspective of family in India.
- (6) The possibility 3(b) is a remote and virtually an improbable contingency. Some social groups may represent this possibility if the dominant feature of the society is to pursue the joint family

organization. However, there are likely to be other social groups which may not be numerically important but which represent the possibilities denoted by 3(c) and/or 3(d).

(7) If 3(c) is found effective, it will suggest that the society is changing towards a nuclear family organization but the change is effected by a demographic shift whereby some immutable social groups are dying out and some other immutable social groups are taking their place. This form of change, therefore, will not register any process of nuclearization of joint family structures, as caused by changes made by the people in their social organization. All the same, the perspective of family in India will emerge from further inquiries based on this form of change.

(8) The possibility 3(d) will denote that along with the movement of the people from one social group to another their family organization is changing. So that intensive inquiries into "how" and "why" of this course of change, in the manner explained earlier, will reveal the perspective of family in India.

XIII

The procedure outlined above is not difficult to execute in practice. To illustrate, a preliminary analysis of intra-society variations in the incidence of nuclear and joint family structures in West Bengal villages during 1960-61 (of which the global estimates are given in Table 13) led to the identification of a set of social groups in terms of both ascriptive and non-ascriptive characteristics. The possibility 3(d), thus, appears to be effective in West Bengal society; at any rate, there is the scope to explore this possibility, as it will be seen from Table 16 (page 103).

The table shows that the fourth group registers a steady gain in numerical strength over time as against the other groups which register a steady loss correspondingly, and it denotes a fairly steady percentage-incidence of nuclear families over time as do the other three groups in their respective ways.

In reference to the indicators in Table 12, the figures in cols. 8-10 of Table 16 show that: (1) the first group is restricted to stage 1 hypotheses of continuation of joint family structures, (2) the second and third groups are in the transitional phase between stage 1 hypotheses and stage 2 hypotheses of persistence of joint family structures but the formation of nuclear units in the developmental cycle of joint families, and (3) the fourth group tends to reflect the extreme situation

TABLE 16

SOCIAL GROUP	CRITERIA FOR IDENTIFICATION			PERCENTAGE OF FAMILIES IN EACH "SOCIAL GROUP" TO TOTAL FAMILIES			PERCENTAGE OF THE NUCLEAR TO ALL FAMILIES IN EACH "SOCIAL GROUP"		
	Education*	Occupation†	Religion and caste levels‡	1950	1956	1960-61	1950	1956	1960-61
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
1	High	High	Hindu-high (H1)	15	9	2	21	19	22
2	High	High	Hindi-middle (H2)	25	17	8	42	40	41
			Hindu-low (H3),						
3	High	High	Muslim (M),	27	19	13	46	46	47
			Christian (C)						
	High	Low	H1, H2, H3, M, C						
4	Low	High	H1, H2, H3, M, C	33	55	77	72	74	71
	Low	Low	H1, H2, H3, M, C						
All "social groups"				100	100	100	50	58	62

*"High" education denotes matriculation and higher levels.

"Low" education denotes under-matriculation levels or no education.

†"High" occupations are of landholders, large-scale farmers, wholesale or retail traders, managers, executives, clerks, professionals like doctors, etc.

"Low" occupations are of all others.

‡"High" caste level is comprised of Brahmin, Vaidya, Kayastha.

"Middle" caste level is comprised of all other *pure* castes.

"Low" caste level is comprised of *impure* castes.

of stage 3 hypotheses of a partial nuclearization of joint family structures. We notice further that the first group is composed of high caste Hindus who have a comparatively high education and a high economic position in the society. The second and third groups are composed of people affiliated to other religion and castes but who also have a comparatively high education and a high economic position in the society. And the fourth group is composed of people affiliated to any religion and caste but who are: (i) uneducated or have little education, or (ii) placed low in the economic ladder, or (iii) distinguished from the constituents of the other three groups in both the ways mentioned above.

Thus, specific to West Bengal society, we find a pattern of family organization vis-a-vis the members of the society forming groups in a particular manner. It appears that, firstly, education and/or occupation and, secondly, the religion and/or caste affiliation of the people are the important contemporary factors to register change in family organization in the society. We may now pursue these findings with reference to: (1) the emergence of these groups in the contemporary and historical dimensions, (2) the family organization of the respective groups in the time sequence, and (3) the material and non-material factors of change or stability of family organization in the respective groups at succeeding points in time. So that the *trend* of group formation in West Bengal society with reference to the familial and other attributes of the people, which will not suffer from any constraint to characterize these people in the contemporary and historical dimensions, will reveal *the perspective of family in West Bengal*.

To be sure, the trend will be manifest evermore precisely and comprehensively as we gather more and more knowledge in course of undertaking this piece of research. Thus, further inquiries from what have so far been made may lead to the detection of more sharply differentiated inter-group variations in West Bengal society than those shown in Table 16. Also, the indicators employed from Table 12 may be made more appropriate for West Bengal by replacing the data for Tables 1 and 2 with those which refer exclusively to this state or the intra-state social groups as identified presently in Table 16. These, however, are matters for improvement in the future, which may also alter the course of research in the end. For the present, therefore, we may initiate the course of research as illustrated above, and extend it to all other space-specific societies and communities in India. So that the comprehensive undertaking will not only ensure a precise and, eventually, an unambiguous identification of the social groups which denote the emerging pattern of family structures in India but will form the base to answer the questions "how" and "why" in the given field of social change after registering "what it is".

In this way, the perspective of family in India, which is speculative and conjectural at the present state of our knowledge, will be brought to focus by the analytical-inductive approach without the possibility of subjective omission or exaggeration which the descriptive or the analytical-deductive approach may lead to.¹⁵

¹⁵ I am indebted to my colleague Prafulla Chakrabarty for his assistance in computation for the tables in this monograph.

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